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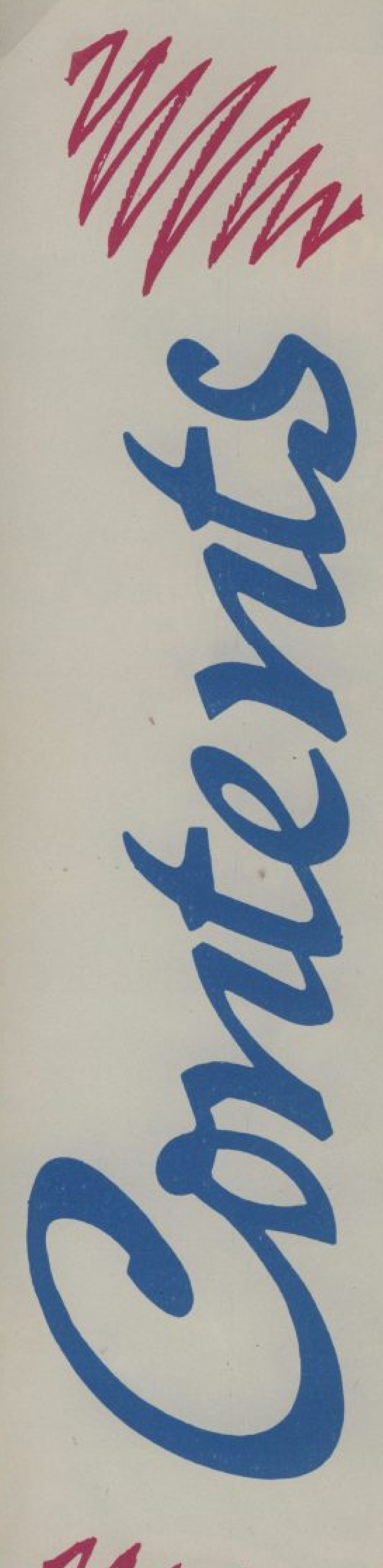
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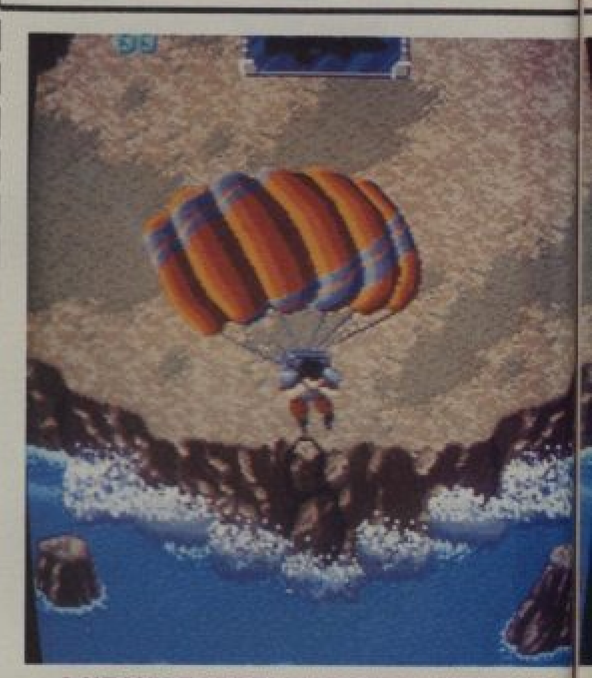
News & Reviews

C+VG team

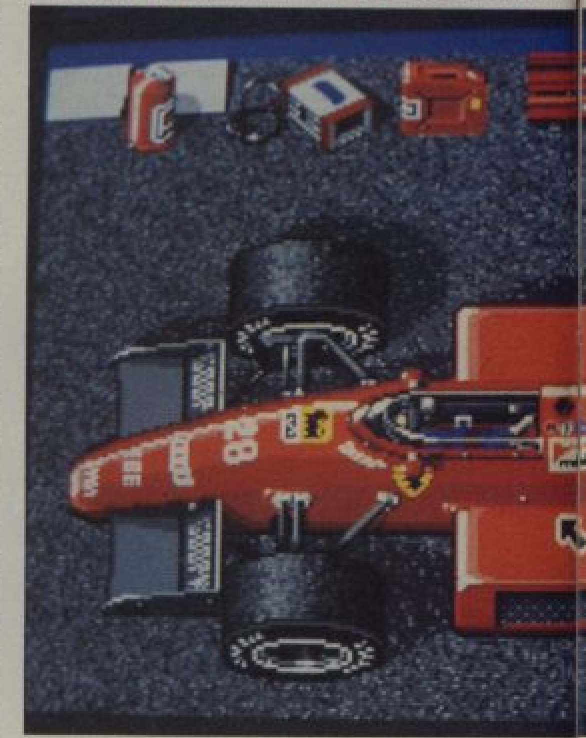
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▲ A HEAVY BARRELL/ARCADE ACTION/P11



▲ FERRARI FORMULA ONE ROARS IN/P66

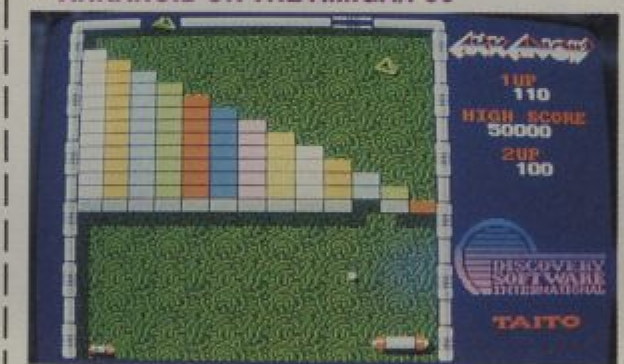


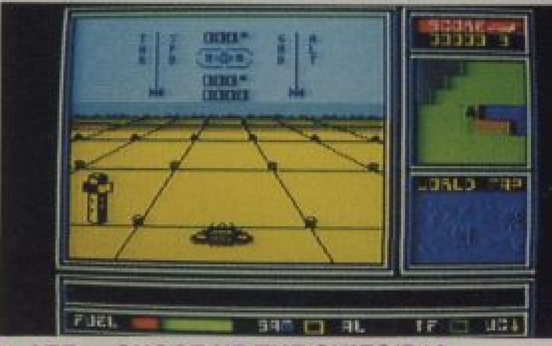
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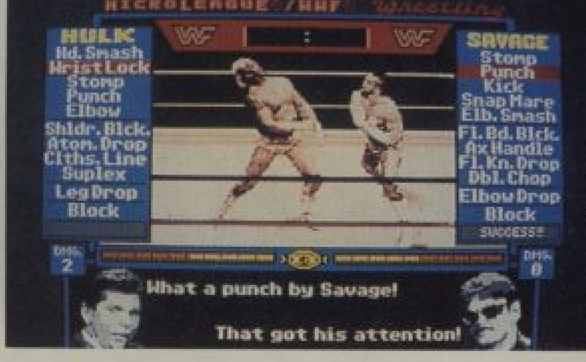




▲ ATF – SHOOT UP THE SKIES/P18

● HULK HOGAN/STREET SCENE/P14







Inside Story

Winner Stays On is our great new games players challenge. We are looking for the best gamers in the country. Super Prizes are up for grabs in the monthly challenge in which you have the chance to challenge our reigning champion.

This month's cover story has the low-down on the latest blockbuster from Cinemaware – the West Cost firm who brought you Defender of the Crown. Featuring screen shots that have to be seen to be believed and schmultzy American 'B' movie plot.

Compos are better than ever – with a chance to win a day our in a Ferrari. We'll ferry you to school, take you out to dinner, and take you for a spin in the mega machine to mark the launch of EA's Ferrari Formula One.

Maps and hints come under the microscope this month – with a whole new look featuring maps of Rastan Saga and Black Lamp with pokes galore and a great new regular feature entitled Bitter Ends.



P118 ▲ MARILYN POUTS FOR FRAME-UP! / P78

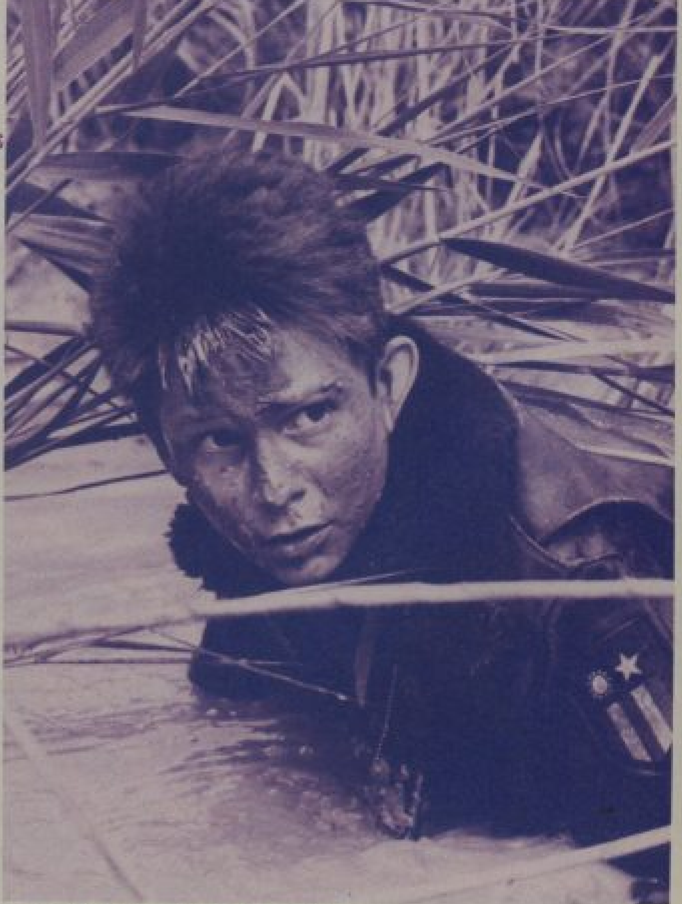




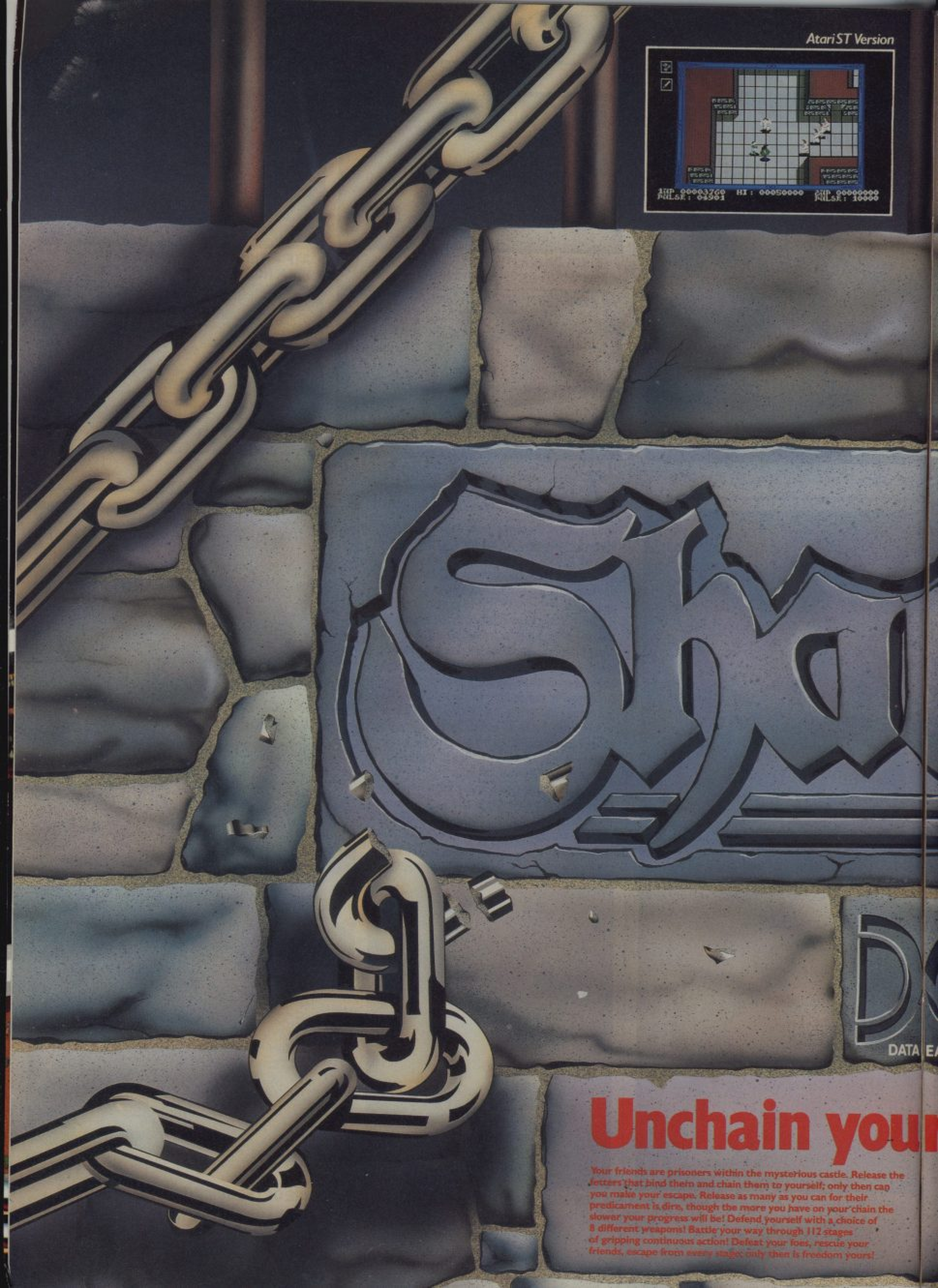
▲ TROLL SNEAKS IN/P42

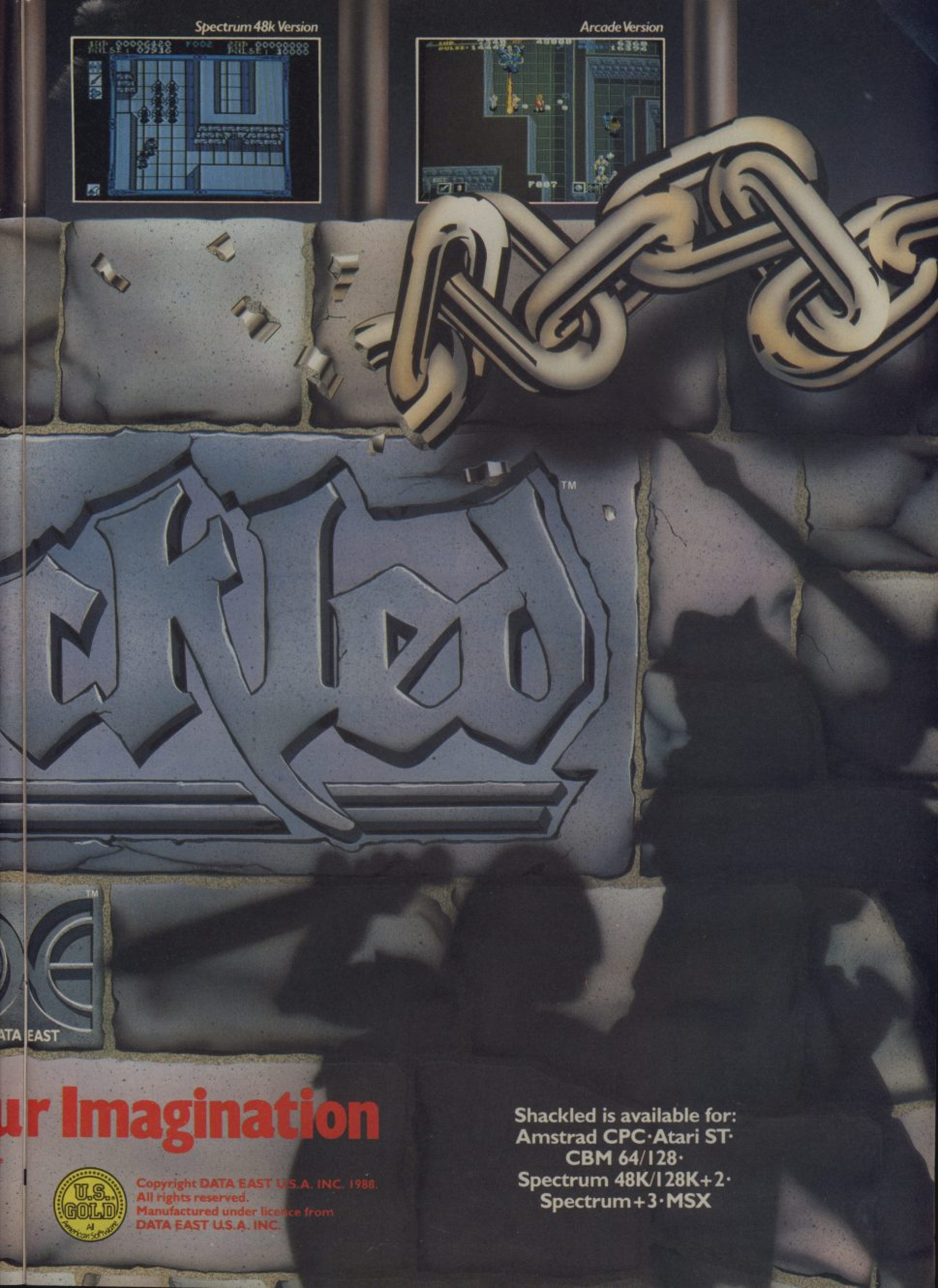


▲ THE MAD LEADER IS BACK/P37



▲ EMPIRE OF THE SUN/P105


Atari ST Version
1UP 00003760 HI: 00050000 2UP 00000000
PULSE: 04901 PULSE: 10000
DATA EA
Unchain you
Your friends are prisoners within the mysterious castle. Release the fetters that bind them and chain them to yourself; only then can you make your escape. Release as many as you can for their predicament is dire, though the more you have on your chain the slower your progress will be! Defend yourself with a choice of 8 different weapons! Battle your way through 112 stages of gripping continuous action! Defeat your foes, rescue your friends, escape from every stage; only then is freedom yours!



Spectrum 48k Version
Arcade Version
ATA EAST
ur Imagination
Copyright DATA EAST U.S.A. INC. 1988.
All rights reserved.
Manufactured under licence from
DATA EAST U.S.A. INC.
Shackled is available for:
Amstrad CPC·Atari ST·
CBM 64/128·
Spectrum 48K/128K+2·
Spectrum+3·MSX



Video cash!

■ May 28th is **Video Charity Day** this year, as part of the massive Telethon '88 charity drive, 2000 shops will be taking part nationwide, with customers being encouraged to give as they rent, as well as take part in in-store competitions and raffles.

It's a worthy cause, aiming to raise £250,000 for charities caring for disabled kids, so mark the date!

Foxy Lady

■ There aren't too many starring female lead characters, which makes **Vixen,** the newie in April from **Martech,** doubly refreshing. You play the last woman on earth, battling to stay alive on the surface and in the caves of a world ruled



by prehistoric nasties.

Armed with a magic whip, Vixen isn't exactly your average heroine, but then she doesn't have your common in or garden problems either.

Vixen is available in April for all formats, in 8 and 16 bit versions.

Dance away

■ At last, the first radio that dances along with you! Mr D.J. from Tomy is the name of this frog like little fellow, a robot radio that moves his mouth, waves his arms and dances around in time with any AM or FM station.

Normally priced at £18.95 or so, we've got one to give away! Simply tell us the name of the famous robot in the film *Forbidden Planet* by the 25th March, and the first one out of the hat gets to take him home.



Sweet Dreams

■ **Knightmare, Anglia TV's** adventure game show, has won a major international award.

The show, which mixes role-playing and advanced computer graphics and animation, captured the **Jean d'Arcy International Award for Video Production,** beating 19 other entries from around the world including the United States and Japan.

The international jury praised the programme's conception and technical innovations''.

Producer and director **Sally Freeman,** who received tha award in Paris, said: ''Everyone seemed delighted by the programme. We were told it was the most original and exciting piece of television for a long time.''

The game, which involves teams of youngsters in a problem-solving quest through a computer-created medieval maze of dungeons and caverns, is the brainchild of Anglia TV journalist **Tim Child.**

He has set up a production company, Ideas Factory, which will make a new 13-part *Knightmare* series for Anglia for screening on Children's ITV in the autumn.

It will again feature computer graphics and animation from the Travelling Matte Company combined with the fantasy interiors of artist David Rowe.

The new series also



promises further innovation in the use of computer environments and interactive drama.

Flying High!

■ **Falcon, Mirrorsoft's F-16** flight simulator originally developed by Spectrum Holobyte in America is now available in Europe for the 1 meg Mac (£44.99) and the IBM PC (£34.99), with Amiga, ST, and CBM 64 versions to follow.

Apparently based on advice from real F-16 a pilots, Falcon gives the effect of actually sitting in a cockpit, complete with controls, and allows you to go up against as many as three enemy Migs at a time. You can also undertake air to ground missions taking our missile sites, bridges and airfields using a variety of weapons. A ''black box'' flight recorder records your mission, enabling you to replay your dogfights, and spot your mistakes. The game swept the awards in America this year, so look forward to something special.

Bark & Byte

■ If you're sick of outer space shoot-em ups, tired of racing across continent and bored of working your way around dungeons, **Verminator** – a new release from Rainbird Software for the Atari ST could be the game for you.

You have been employed

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? How about a hang-glider of supersonic jet? The answer to all these questions is yes. Impossible, you say. But C + VG Deputy Editor *Paul Boughton* experiences the impossible when he experienced the X factor.



Within the space of a few minutes reality was suspended. I found myself riding on a space shuttle, zipping along through a computerised fantasy landscape, riding the clouds strapped to a hang-glider, taking the back seat in a rally cross car, clinging like grim death to the handles of a race bike and losing my stomach on a rollercoaster.

Of course it was all an illusion created by what could be the forerunner of a new generation of joy rides — the Super X Prokon simulator.

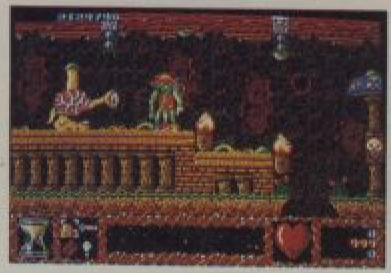
Imagine a fibreglass capsule 20 feet long and 10 feet wide sitting on three hydraulic ramps. It is capable of taking up to 14 passengers. They all sit facing a six feet by four feet screen. The screen appears to be a window out of the capsule. On to it are projected video pictures taken from film or computer — synthesised sources showing continuous forward facing action.

But it is micro magic that makes the illusion come alive. A computer control system operates the hydraulic ramps to raise, lower and tile the capsule in time with the projected picture.

So, for example, if your moving to the top of a rollercoaster, the capsule tilts back. When it plunges down, so does the capsule. The effect is amazing. You actually feel as if you're on a real big dipper ride.

The simulator was developed by Poole-based Super X Ltd.

The idea is for the simulator to be sold to leisure and theme parks, shopping malls or museums. But before you try and get your mum and dad to buy you one for your birthday or next Christmas, you must realise they cost around £70,000 to buy.



by the Tree Council to clear an ancient oak of an infestation by hoards of terrifying parasites. For each revolting wriggly thing you take out, you earn extra cash, which you can then sink into buying better equipment.

Atari ST version (£24.95) out in April, Amiga to follow.

Spellbinder!

■ **Sorceror Lord,** already available on Spectrum and Amstrad, is now out on Commodore 64 at £12.99 cassette, from **PSS**.



Oh Brother!

■ **Target Renegade** is Ocean's follow-up to **Renegade.** Now you play his brother, out for revenge! Before you get within punching, shooting or otherwise maiming distance of chief baddie "Mr Big" you must fight through five levels.



Stamp of Approval

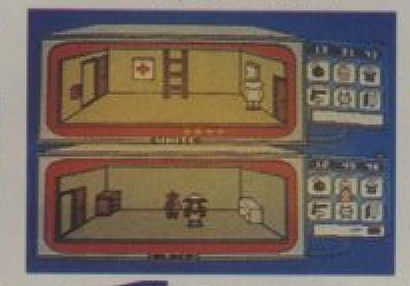
■ Play-By-Mail goes from strength to strenth — that was the verdict after the third **British Play-By-Mail Convention** held in London recently.

The convention was hosted by *C+VG's* very own ***Wayne***.



I Spy....

■ The three Spy Vs Spy games are to be released on a compilation tape by **Databyte. The Spy Trilogy** will be out on Spectrum, Commodore and Amstradm, price £9.95.



Show time

■ This year's **Atari User Show** will be held at Alexandra Palace, North London, on April 22, 23 and 24. Entry on the door will cost adults £3 and £2 for under 16s.

Chocs away

■ **Cascade,** the company which scored a massive hit with **Ace** and **Ace II,** takes to the air again later this year with a tie up with the Royal Air Force. The word is that this could be the ultimate flight simulation. Any profits from the game will go to the RAF Benevolent Fund.

Wolf bane!

■ Fans of the **Lone Wolf** role-playing game books will have to wait until autumn for **Super Soft's** adventure game based on author **Joe Dever's** creation. The adventure, which was originally due out this April, will be on Atari ST and Amiga.

Cool Pool.

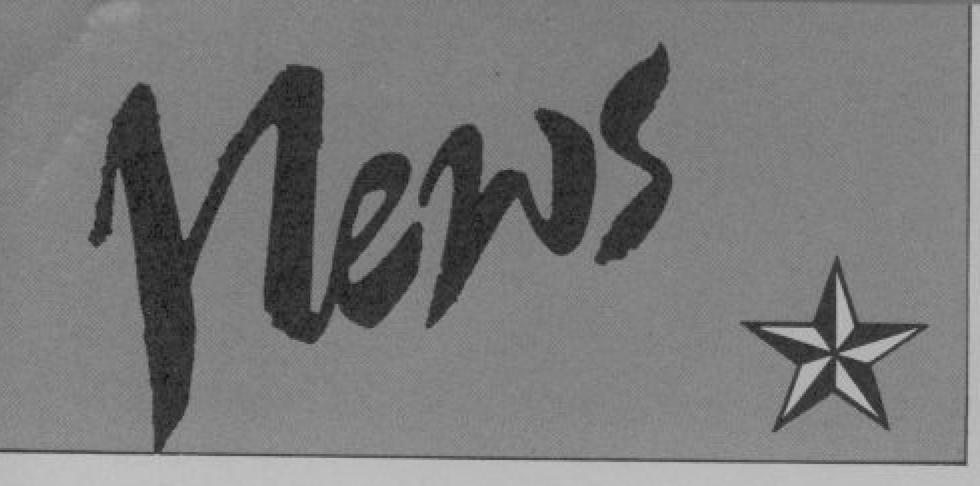
■ Watch out for **Blissbreak** from **Outlaws,** which promises to be a new look at pool and snooker. But weird! That's all we know at the moment. Release is expected during May.

Meanwhile, **The Shoot 'Em Up Construction Set** is due for release on the Amiga this summer.

Own Goal

■ **Roy of the Rovers, Piranha's** game based on comic hero, is now for set for release around Easter.


MORE ACTION AND EXCITEMENT
THAN HUMANLY POSSIBLE!



THE CULT OF POWER

Brace yourself for the looming row over the new high-tech toys heading your way, spearheaded by Captain Power. Could they inspire violence? John Gilbert investigates.

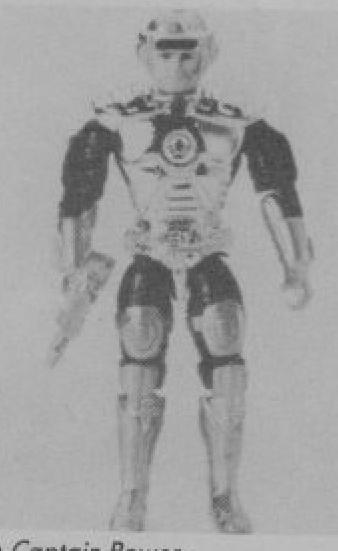
Realism in new-tech toys has gone too far, according to an increasing number of British psychologists, television programme buyers and MPs from all political parties.

The latest subject of worry is **Mattel's** indestructible superhero **Captain Power** and his **Soldiers of the Future.** The Captain is growing into a cult figure through his own interactive series, broadcast for children by the Superchannel satellite television company, and its the interactive capacity of the show which is worrying the adults.

Each one hour long programme takes place on the Earth of the 22nd Century. It's a planet devasted by the recently ended Metal Wars between humans and the machines they once thought of as slaves.

Lord Dread rules Earth from Volcania, a massive fortress from which he oversees the operation of the Bio Dread Empire. Most of humanity has been enslaved, although some bands of leaderless resistance fighters still remain. Dread fears only one of these bands, a group of Freedom Fighters lead by Captain Jonathan Power – who bears a striking similarity to Robocop. To the people of the free world they become kmown as Captain Power and the Soldiers of the Future.

Each of the Soldiers is an experts in different fields. There's Lieutenant Tank Ellis, who leads the ground assault unit, Major Hawk Masterson who's the air ace, Corporal



▲ *Captain Power.*

Pilot Chase with his technical expertise and Colonel Singray Johnson, who's the undersea attack specialist. On the Dread side you have Sauron Sky Sentry, Blastarr Ground Guardian and Bio Dread Ocean Attack Warlord.

The show is tightly scripted and the stars take part in about 130 violent encounters during its 50-minute run time. Critics are less worried about the violence than the ability of the viewer to take part in the action. Mattel, the co-creator of the Captain Power cult, markets a light sensitive gun in the States which is compatible with the show. It'll soon be available in the UK.

The gun is pointed at the screen and picks up light signals encoded on screen targets. Children can aim at the screen from up to 10 feet away and score points each time one of those targets are hit. The television characters can also return fire, using the same light sensitive technique and take points away. When your score reaches zero your vehicle's cockpit is ejected and you're out of the game.

You can play goodie or baddie as there are two main interactive guns. The first is Captain Power's Jet XT7. It shoots and collects light and has a power check button which indicates the vehicles score in points with electronic bleeps. Dread's vehicle is the Interlocker, the evil lord's throne which acts in a similar way to Power's vehicle but also provides a target lock-on light to assist in aiming the gun. Both weapons are supplied with a video cassette programme if you can't receive satellite TV and can be used with each other, according to Mattel, in one to one combat.

Captain Power differs from other interactive video/TV games because the targets you're told to shoot at are real people. The lobby against the Power concept, both here and in the States says that the TV show is providing target practice for youngsters and bringing acts of aggression to the forefront of impressionable minds. Anything that promotes violence should be censored from children and the technology could be put to better, and more educational uses.



▲ *Inspiration to violence?*

The equally vociferous pro lobby sees the Captain power cult as nothing more than an extension of cowboys and indians or cops and robbers. Shooting the image of a man on the screen is no different than pointing a cap gun at a real boy or girl.

The two sides have drawn their battle lines but, although Mattel is a massive corporation, it is likely to be Parliament which finally decides whether programmes such as Captain Power will be seen on British screens.



The British Government has already started to discuss the laws which should govern de-regulation of our television networks. British companies such as Virgin and Robert Maxwell's BPCC publishing corporation have already sunk money into satellite television and a host of US stations are already available to British viewers who have satellite dishes and decoders at home. They carry a constant mixture of the latest movies, music programmes, current affairs, and evangelism.

The Government will be able to censor such output, which could eventually include Captain Power, through the decoding consules which viewers buy with their satellite dishes. A decoder can be programmed by the manufacturer-or-user-to put certain transmissions off limits to viewers.

The technique, called encryption, was designed to allow parents to monitor their children's television intake and make sure that their kids couldn't access pornographic material.

So far only the Captain Power satellite TV programmes are available in Britain but, within a few months, the interactive toys will be in high street shops and other toy manufacturers will start to filter in for the projected interactive gaming boom.

Already the manufacturers of Laser Tag and Photon have their own shows – The Photons and Laser Tag Academy – on Super Channel and the plan is to go the way of Captain Power. Mattel and the others who follow its lead are likely to feel the bite of government satellite legislation by the peak Christmas selling time this year.

Beyond the farthest reaches of the Galaxy...

RIMRUNNER

From the team that brought you BARBARIAN THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR

ATARI ST

COMMODORE 64

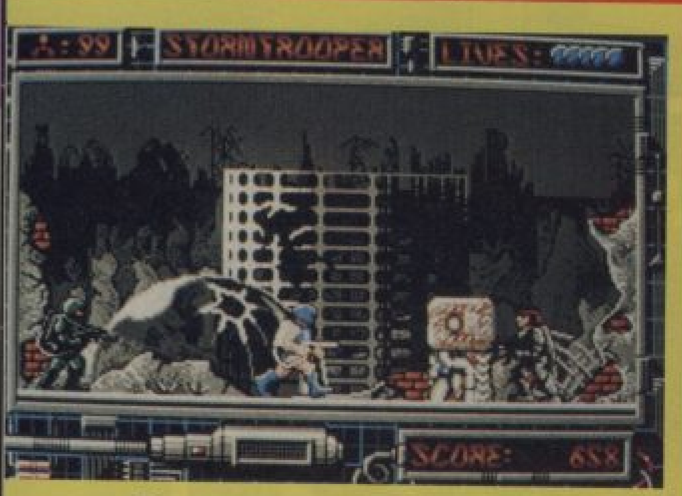




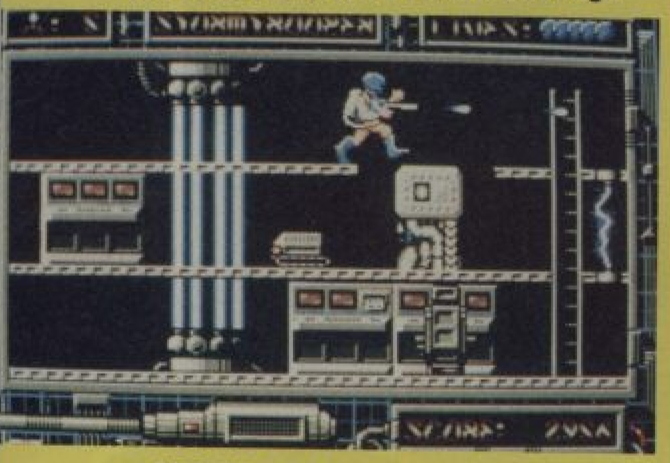
AMSTRAD CPC

Available from all good computer game stockists, or by mail order from: Palace, The Old Forge, 7 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX
Send cheque or postal order for £8.99 (C64, Amstrad cassette), £12.99 (C64 disk), £14.99 (ST, Amstrad disk) plus 80p P&P.
Access and Barclaycard holders telephone 01-278 0751.

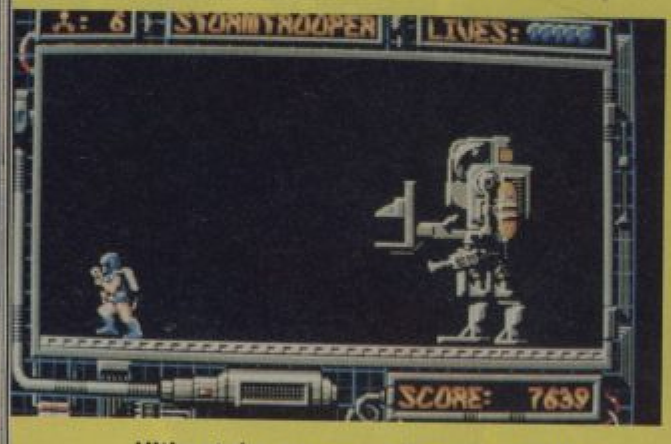
Street Scene......



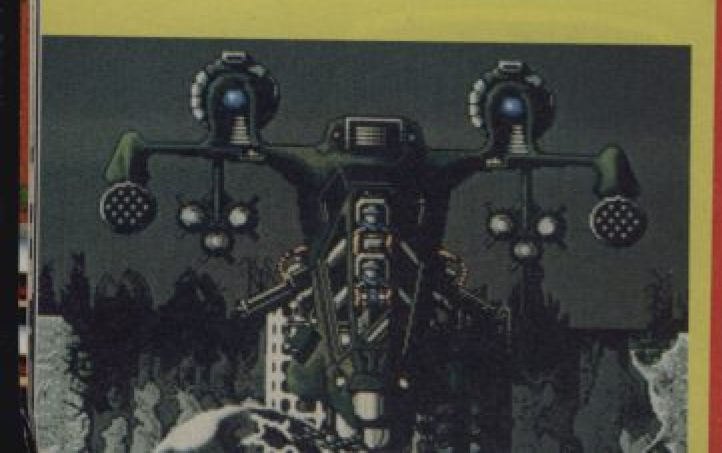
These tasty looking shots come from a new name on the software front, Creation. Called *Stormtrooper*, the game is set for release on the Atari ST and then Amiga

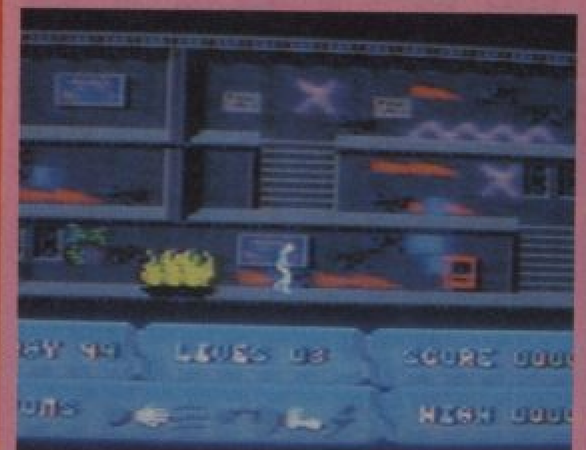


and PC. It's a 16 level arcade adventure set in a mining complex overrun by mercenaries. You play a bounty hunter out for a head count to make some money.



Ultimately, you must "terminate" the complex's top geophysicist who has defected to a foreign power.







CRL's newie for the Commodore 64 is *Time Fighter*, a shoot, beat and blow 'em up tha ranges through eight different time periods, each with suitable weapons. Unlike many multi-level games, you do not have to defeat the earlier scenarios in order to play you're favourite, be it Robin Hood, gangland Chicago or – my fave – space warfare.

Time Fighter is unusual in that it features particularly realistic character animation, with a very convincing running and throwing action for the earth bound levels, and a realistic bounce to the weightless space battle.

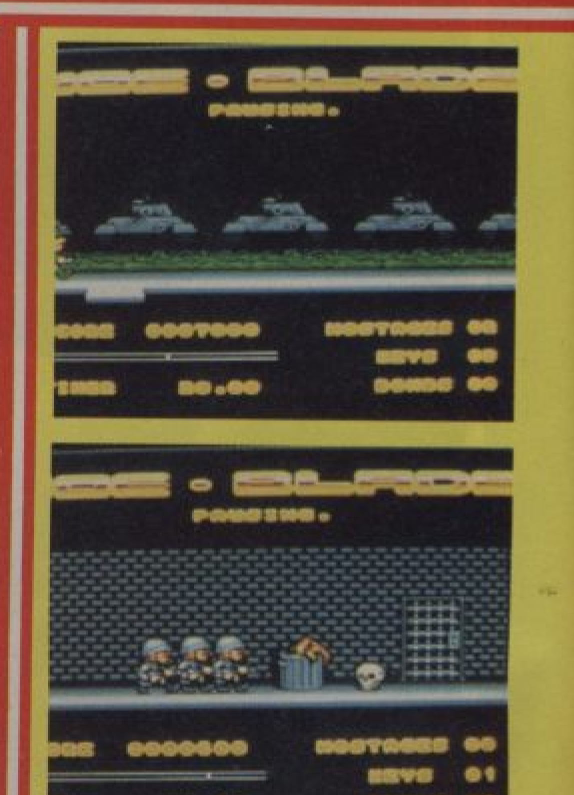
Worth keeping an eye open for are future developments from the Software Invasion team that did *Time Fighter*, especially if they manage to bring their undoubted advances in character animation to more sophisticated and complex games.

Fancy a stimulating stomp, munch and crunch game? Then check out *Aaargh!* from Melbourne House, based on the Arcadia coin-op. You play the part of either the orgre or monster in this quest to find golden eggs. And nothing will stand in your way. You can smash buildings, stomp people through 12 cities. But not everything will go your way. There are killer hornets, catapults and cannons to battle against. This shot is from the Amiga.

Aaargh! is due for release in April.







Joe Blade from Players, which came out in August last year in Spectrum, CBM64 and Amstrad versions, is now available for the Atari ST and Amiga at a budget £9.95, with the Atari 8 bit coming soon at £1.99. One of the biggest selling budget games of last year, the 16 bit models retain the same basic game plan. But features enhanced graphics. These screen shots are from the ST.





Interceptor from Electronic Arts is poised for take-off on the Amiga within the next few weeks. This combat flight simulation gives you the choice of two fighter planes, a F-18 Hornet and F-16 Falcon. There are six combat missions to experience which take place over the skies of San Francisco Bay. The missions include protecting _Air Force One_ from enemy fighters as the President seeks to land safely at San Francisco International Airport; preventing World War III by shooting down incoming cruise missiles; rescuing a pilot downed at sea; visually identifying an unknown plane that has appeared on radar; and preventing the escape of two stolen F-16s. There is also a training mission, a top secret mission for advanced pilots, and a free-flight mode.

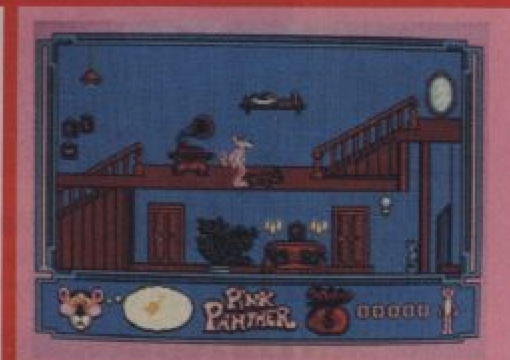




Firebird looks to the land of the rising sun for its up and coming graphical adventure – _Samurai Warrior – The Battles of Usagi Yojimo._ Usagi is a cute cartoon rabbit spiced with arcade action – created by Stan Sakai. The background to the comics and the computer game is 17th Century Japan, during a time of unrest and civil war, where warlords battle with warlord. Usagi is a warrior bodyguard in the services of Lord Noriyuki who has been kidnapped. Usagi must rescue him. These screenshot are from the Commodore 64 version which should be available during April.



This is _The Destiny Knight,_ otherwise known as _Bard's Tale II._ The Electronic Arts fantasy adventure which covers six cities, 25 dungeon levels and a wilderness. The game includes seven timed puzzles, news spells, monsters, hand-to-hand and long-range combat. These shots are from the Amiga and expect the game to arrive sometime in March.

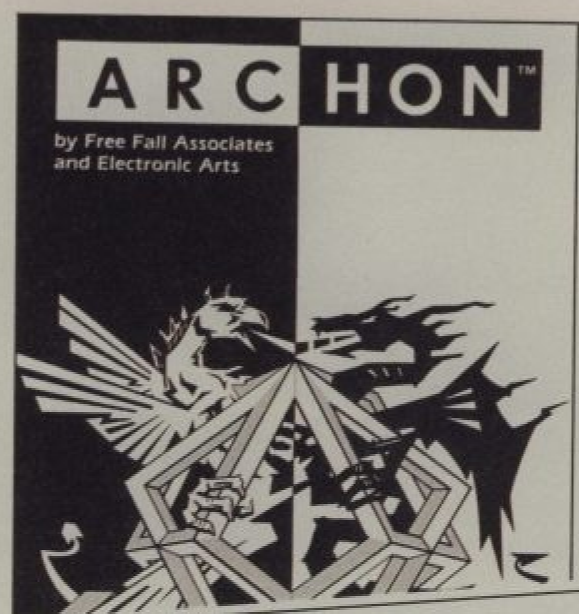


Dum, dee dum, dee dum, dee dum, dee dum, dee dum, dee duuuum – _Pink Panther_ is here _(well almost)_ for the Amiga and is complete with that infuriating jingle and characteristic flip walk.

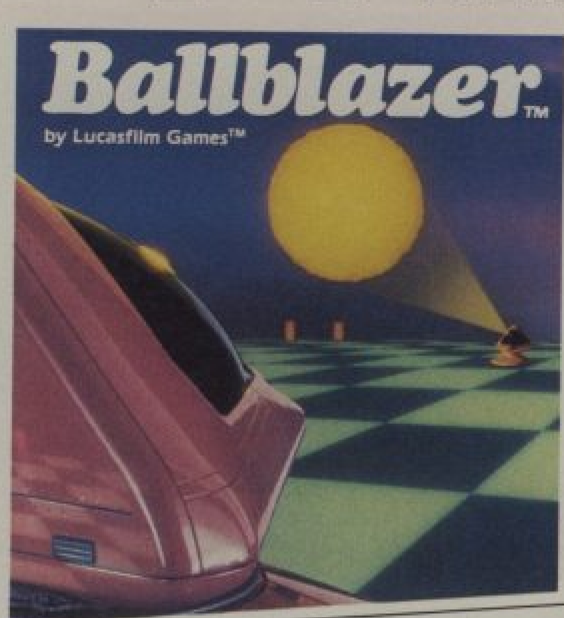
The tune is sampled and sounds identical to the music at the TV show. Clouseau is also there in his Mackintosh. The details of the plot are not known as we go to press – but the top German games company Magic Bytes is coding the game for Gremlin Graphics – who has taken over publishing the firm's games in the UK.

Another popular cartoon character will be appearing on the Gremlin label later this year – _Mickey Mouse._ As yet a title for Mickey's game has not been decided.

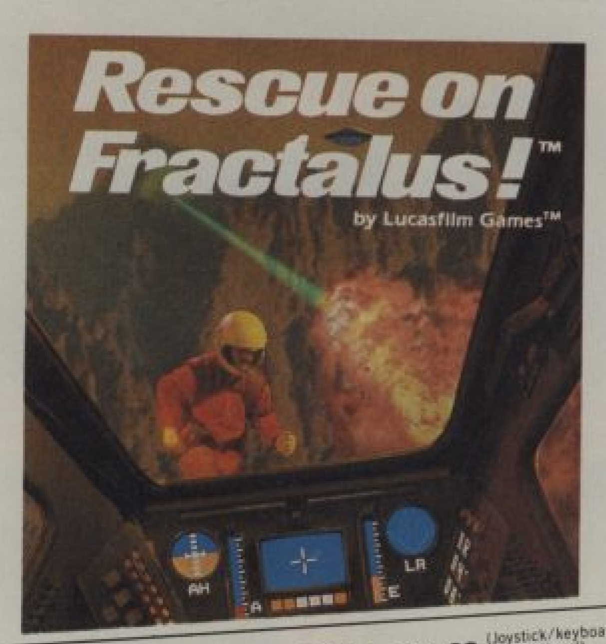
THE LATEST AN



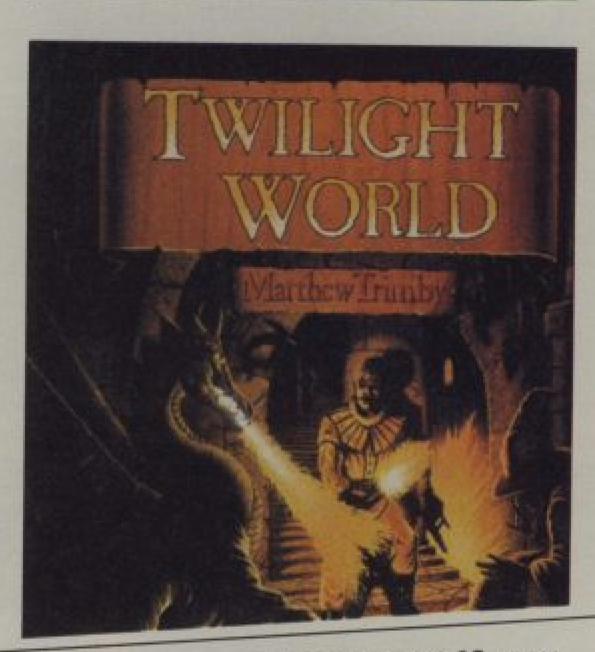
ARCHON – ROM – £14.99 (Joystick)
A battle between the forces of light and darkness. You can't take a square, you have to fight for it.



BALLBLAZER – ROM – £14.99 (Joystick)
Can you shoot the Plasmorb through the moving goalbeams while piloting your Rotofoil? For one or two players.



RESCUE ON FRACTALUS – ROM – £14.99 (Joystick/keyboard optional)
You have to rescue your friends from Fractalus – but the evil Jaggi aren't going to make it easy.



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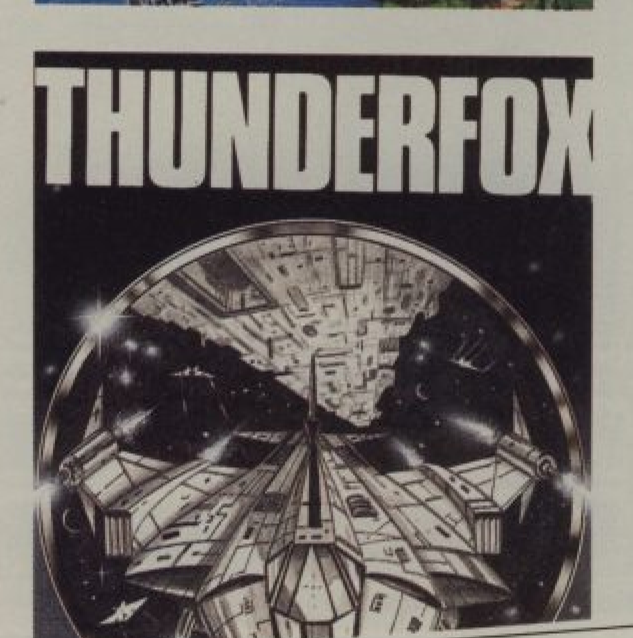


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ATARI®

1

Reviews this issue

ATF

► MACHINES: SPECTRUM/ C64/AMSTRAD.
► SUPPLIER: DIGITAL INTEGRATION.
► PRICES: £8.95 (TAPE) £12.95. (C64/SPEC DISC) £13.95 (AMS DISC).
► VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM.
► REVIEWER: TIM METCALFE.

Digital Integration take to the air again after toying in winter sports with the brilliant *Bobsleigh* simulation. Sad to say that *ATF* isn't one of DI's best releases, although it does offer a depth of play missing from many full-price games.

It's just that we've come to expect more from the company who created *Tomahawk* and *TT Racer,*

ATF is basically a shoot- 'em-up with some clever frills – not one of out and out flight-simulations that have made DI's name.

The reason could be that the game is based on a jet fighter that won't fly until 1990!

In reality the ATF is planned as the most technologically advanced aircraft ever built. It is being developed for the US Airforce by Lockheed, Boeing and General Dynamics. It will have an electronic co-pilot designed to take away many of the more mundane tasks currently performed by the pilot.

The game attempts to simulate this electronic gizmo – but this means you have to spend as much time hitting the keyboard as flying with the joystick. Many of the controls are keyboard based. For example you have to select and fire missiles, access your onboard data-base and jam enemy missiles using the keyboard.

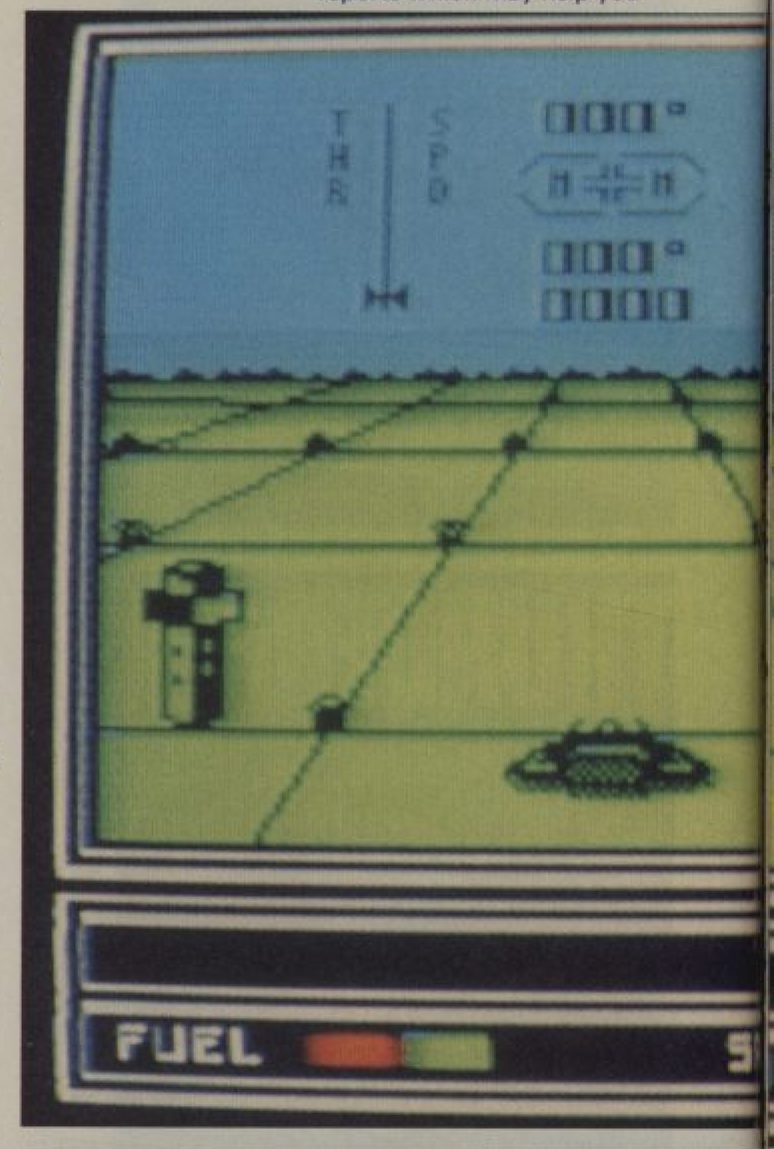
Fortunately there is a sort of "automatic" pilot which, if engaged, guides your ATF over the terrain at an optimum height, avoiding natural hazards – you still have to deal with the man-made ones. The object of the game is to defend allied forces and installations against the enemy, maintaining the balance of power and maybe defeating them totally.

At the beginning of each mission you can call up a war report which shows how the allies are doing against the baddies.

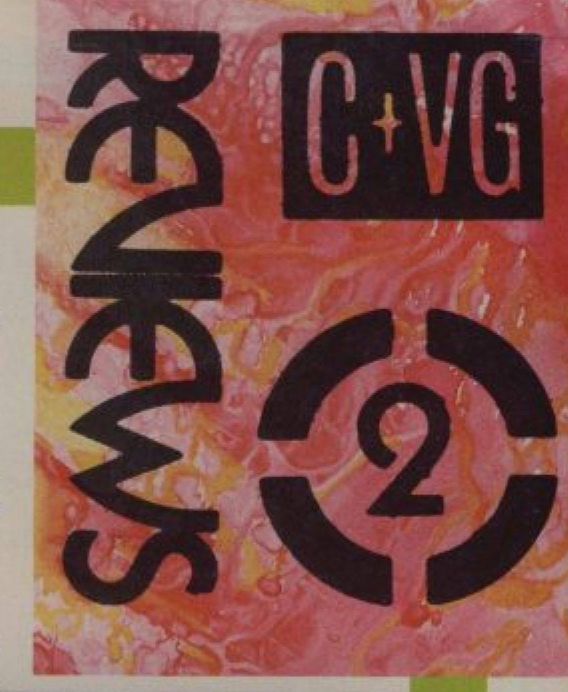
You use this to select which targets you want to aim for.

For example, if the enemy has established more bases than the allies it might be a good idea to take a few out, or perhaps they have suddenly overtaken your bosses in the communications stakes – then it's time to zap a few satellite stations.

The war report will show gains and loses, the status of allied and enemy forces plus intelligence reports which may help you







decide on your strategy.

Remember you'll always need a base to land and refuel at – so protect them well.

Good targets to aim for are communications centres and factorites. Knock out communications and enemy forces won't be able to find out about your movements so quickly. Destroy factories and the replacement of war-machines will slow down. The same applies to the allies – so watch the gains and losses closely.

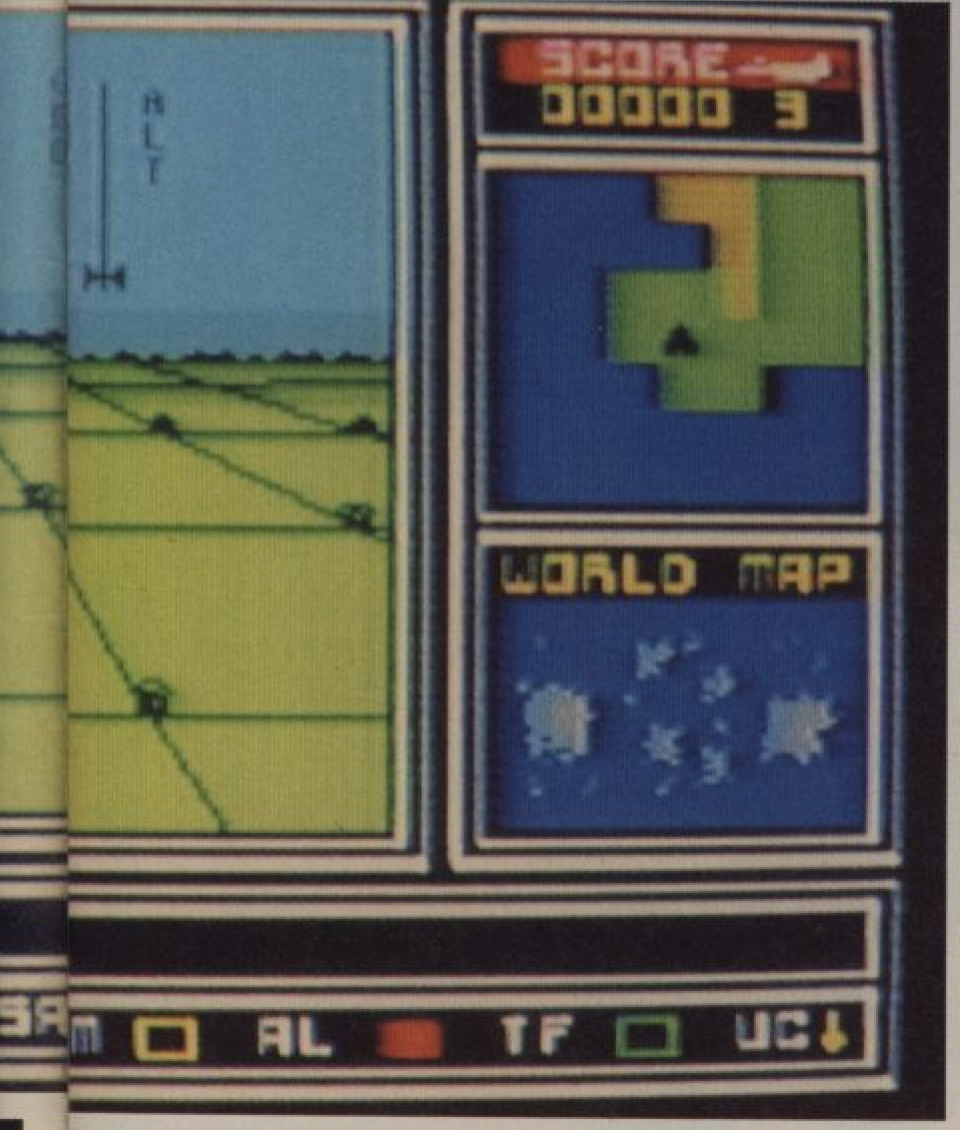
Once you are airbourne this aircraft while the missiles are good for ground targets.

ASRAAM missiles can be guided via the joystick while they are in visual range – a fiddly business. Maverick missiles – the most powerful type much loved by the pilots in *Top Gun* – are computer controlled. You can lock them on to a target displayed on your on-board database and fire. They have a longer range than the ASRAAMs and I found them a lot easier to use.

Once you've loaded up with weapons, it's time to fly into the display you see your fuel level, SAM missile warning light, automatic landing mode and terrain following mode indicators plus undercarriage status.

Immediately above this is the in-flight message window. This tells you things relevant to enemy targets and incoming missiles – if you've managed to jam them or not! – while you are airborne.

Bottom right of the screen you'll see a window which displays information from your onboard computer. You can call up a world map, weapon status,





ATF status and the all important database. The world map shows you where you are and the position of the object currently selected in the database; the weapon status shows you just what's left to blast away with; the ATF status is really a damage report; the database is possibly the most important bit of kit you've got on board and deserves a longer explanation – so here goes.

Once you've selected the database screen you can call up enemy or allied database mode using the D key. The allied database mode is useful for finding friendly bases to land at. Enemy database mode allows you to find and lock on to targets. There are five categories in each mode – dealing with bases, factories, communications, ground and sea forces.

Key G will select the nearest target to the ATF but you can pick your own using the bearing and range co-ordinates shown on the database. Match these with your HUD and you're on the way to a kill.

To enable you to react quickly to in-flight messages there is a database lock on key. For example, if you get a "enemy target" message, you can hit the lock-on key and the targets range and bearing is instantly displayed. All this without having to be in database mode.

Above the computer screen is a short range scanner. This shows you instant info about your immediate surroundings. Interceptors appear as flashing dots, ground installations as steady dots.

A new world is generated for each game and consists of sea, islands and polar regions. The islands consist of beach and scrubland. You can choose to see them as "computerised" terrain relief lines or "real" terrain with bushes and such like.

I preferred the "computerised" style of graphics. The world "wraps around" – if you fly off one "edge" you end up on the other side. Useful to know if you are tracking enemy targets and want to calculate the shortest route.

Each of the allied bases is surrounded by a catchment area. As soon as you enter one of these, the automatic landing indicator starts flashing. If you want to land you can hit the L key and you'll be guided gently down to the landing strip to refuel and re-arm.

information is not available – but land at a friendly base and you can call it up between flights, as well as being able to re-arm your ATF.

Re-arming and refuelling is a simple joystick controlled action and is carried out at the start of each game, after one of your ATFs has been destroyed or when you land at a friendly base. You have a choice of weaponry – machine-guns and two sorts of missiles.

There is a weight limit – so you have to select the right sort of firepower for the strategy you intend to follow.

The cannons are used to gun-down enemy interceptor dangerzone. The main display shows you a view of the ATF, plus a heads-up readout. Unlike other DI games you don't find yourself actually "in" the cockpit of the jet fighter, you see it sitting in front of you on the landing strip. The heads-up display shows thrust, speed, altitude and ground height – useful when you are indulging in a bit of high speed low flying under enemy radar.

This display also shows you your current heading plus the bearing and range of any target currently selected in your on-board database, more about this later.

At the bottom of the main

► GRAPHICS	6
► SOUND	4
► VALUE	7
► PLAYABILITY	7

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COMPUTER GAME





Screen shot from Atari ST

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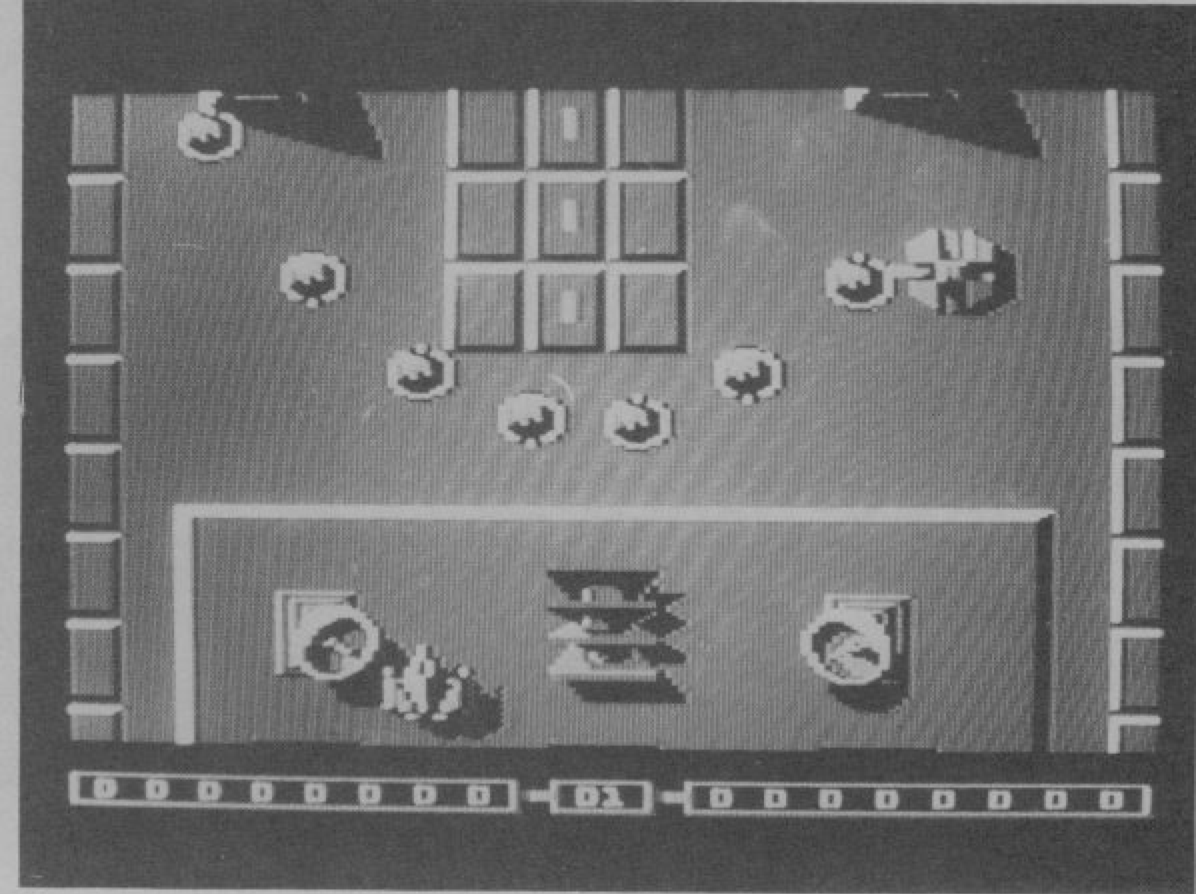

Screen shot from Amstrad

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Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd., Alpha House,
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BEDLAM

▼ *It's a fairly run-of-the-mill shoot 'em up.*



► MACHINE: AMSTRAD, C64, SPECTRUM 128/+2, IBM PC.

► SUPPLIER: GO!

► PRICE: AMSTRAD £9.99 CASSETTE, £14.99 DISK, C64 £8.99, PC £19.99, SPECTRUM £8.99.

► VERSION TESTED: AMSTRAD/C64.

► REVIEWER: MATT BIELBY.

Well, there are shoot-'em-ups and there are shoot-'em-ups, and there are so damn many of them around these days that a game has to be pretty special to stand out. And I'm afraid this isn't it.

Playing *Bedlam* is like going back in time two or three years: it would have seemed a pretty decent game then, and to be fair it still kept me quiet for a couple of hours, but to earn a C+VG hit, or anything like one these days you have to be a little bit original, a little bit different.

Bedlam on the Amstrad lacks even the pinball level that added spice to the C64 version and others, leaving us with the usual tosh about space academy pilots, and a decidely average game.

Anyway, enough of this vitriol, let's get into some more detail, shall we? Your little space ship sits around the bottom of a vertically scrolling screen, and blasts away at wave after wave of alien ships and static space stations. I say sits at the bottom, though in fact you can move up and down the screen as well: it is just that the sideways movement is so much faster than the back/forward action that you do better sitting down there in a suitable spot and taking them out like sitting ducks. In fact a great deal rests in just which side of the screen you happen to be on, since a lot of the incomings are dead easy to dodge if you are in the right place, but just trash you completely if you picked the wrong one.

None of the alien ships, which come in waves of seven or eight, actually fire anything at you, but this is not the case with the space stations, many of which have laser cannon emplacements that throw all sorts of things at you, the trickiest being ones that kick you about the screen for a while. You can fly over once you've blasted it, but wipe out if you hit anything still going. Some space stations reveal hearts (extra lives) or shield shapes (force fields) which you can pick up if you fly over them.

Once you learn the attack patterns of the alien craft, you can place yourself in the correct corners of the screen to prepare for their coming and blast your way through the first few levels all the way to the big mother alien. She is suitably difficult to destroy (go for the mouth).

Hmm. Like I said, nothing here that smacks particularly of original thought, and the graphics and sound are far to run-of-the-mill to save the day. Other versions do have the considerable added advantage of a whizzo space pinball level, but I'm afraid it's the Amstrad we're talking about here. The weird thing is that the very ordinariness of the thing doesn't really affect it's playability at all, which in actual fact isn't too bad. I must say I've quite surprised myself because despite all I've said I wouldn't really mind another shot. Ain't life strange?

► GRAPHICS:	4
► SOUND:	4
► PLAYABILITY:	6
► VALUE:	5



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CYBERNOID

4

- MACHINES: SPECTRUM/ AMSTRAD/CBM 64.
- SUPPLIER: HEWSON.
- PRICE: £7.99 (SPECTRUM)/CBM 64 AND AMSTRAD (£9.99/£14.99).
- VERSIONS TESTED: SPECTRUM/ AMSTRAD.
- REVIEWER: PAUL BOUGHTON.

If you thought your faithful old Spectrum has been looking a little lack-lustre lately, that there was no sparkle to the games, then think again. Make way for *Cybernoid – The Fighting Machine*. It's a stunner.

So just in case you were planning to junk your faithful Speccie and upgrade to an Atari ST or Amiga, delay that momentous decision for a while and get *Cybernoid*.

The game is the creation of Raffaele Cecco, the brain behind *Exolon*. *Cybernoid* has a similar feel to *Exolon* but for me has the edge in playability and style.

Again, to be perfectly honest, the game idea isn't the most startingly original concept and has cropped up again and again. But what game is truly original nowadays? Okay, I can hear you all shouting out *Nebulus*, another Hewson offering by strange chance.

The basic idea is to control a space battle fighter, collect weapons, explore, survive and destroy the aliens.

Federation storage depots have been raided by space pirates. They have stolen valuable minerals, jewels, ammunition and superduper space weaponry. And, not surprisingly, the Federation wants them back. And that's your job. You must retrieve all these goodies and return them to the space depot before time runs out.

The opening screens on both the Spectrum and Amstrad versions are very impressive.

The *Cybernoid* sits beside a volcano spewing molten rockets into the air. Surprisingly, I thought these would destroy me straight away. But no, I sailed safely through. It's as you descend into the second screen that the nasties come at you. And it's here that you begin to pick up bits and pieces, including the add on weapons.

And it's not only the aliens you have to look out for. The pirates have activated a defence system which deals death to invaders.

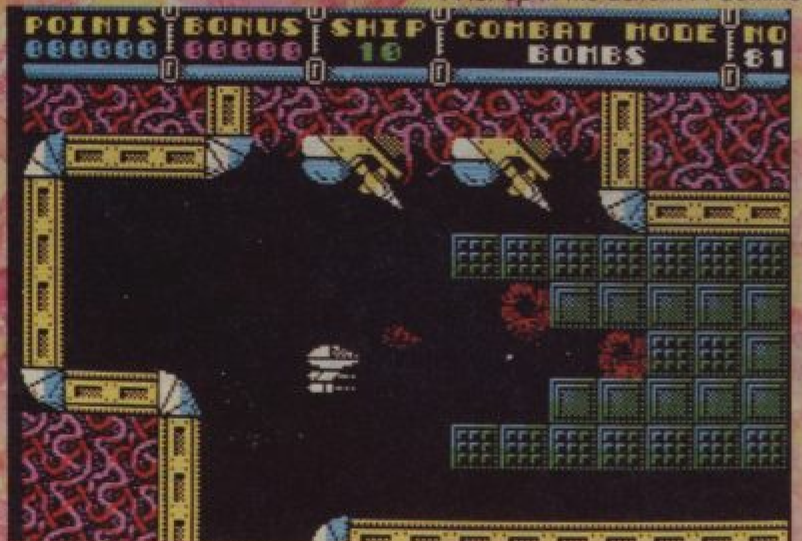
Once you start playing, you're hooked. And there's eight levels or so to keep you playing.

Cybernoid is one of the best Spectrum releases for ages and probably the best Amstrad game around at the moment.

	SPECTRUM	AMSTRAD
► GRAPHICS	8	8
► SOUND	7	8
► VALUE	9	8
► PLAYABILITY	9	9



▲ A let-up in the action. A Commodore shot.

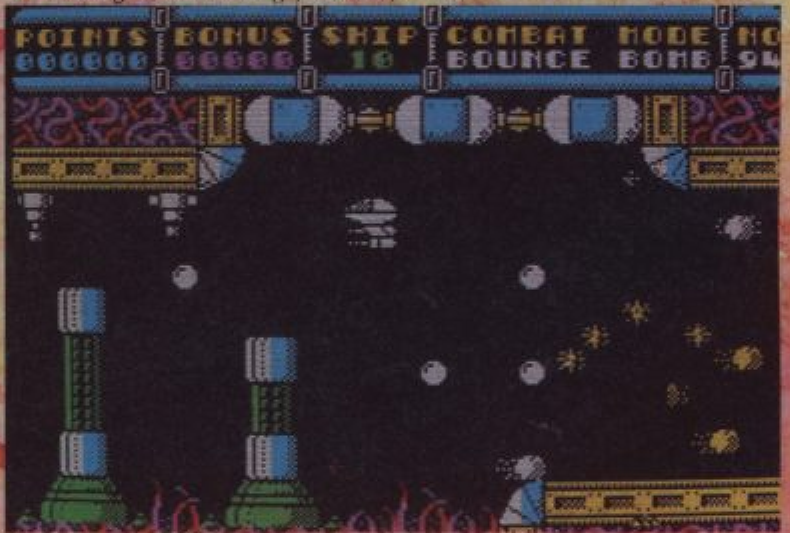


▲ Beware the hidden traps.


▲ Floating death coming your way.



▲ Peril lurks at the end of the narrow passage.



▲ Destroy the "beehive" object.

5

GEE BEE

► MACHINE: AMIGA.
► SUPPLIER: ACTIVISION.
► PRICE: £24.95.
► REVIEWER: BRIAN WEBBER.

Spin the engine, jiggle those flaps, chocks away and let me take you back to the time when men were men, women were beautiful and the aeroplane was king.
Everyone's heard of *Out Run,* the great arcade game, and this is the air version. Rich in '30s atmosphere and thrills and spills.

The game begins with a wicked title screen that looks like it's been lifted straight from an old newsreel, showing a crowd with your stubby flying fuel tank in the foreground. Slowly colour fades in, Ragtime music plays, you see yourself seated tense in the cockpit and... they're off!

There are three different levels of play – Beginner, Expert and Ace – to chose from, each looking pretty much the same – there is only so much variation you can get in the sight of planes roaring over the desert after all – but with the speed of the ride and the tightness of the course changing dramatically.

Each level consists of four events that have to be completed in the given time, with a bonus being awarded for time left over, as well as giving you longer on the next event. Normally you are just flying around a course while avoiding the other planes, but occasionally you get a shot at a special event which could be flying around poles, or coming in low and bursting a series of anchored balloons. You are asked to pop all thirty, but on the first few goes it is hard enough to take out one of them!

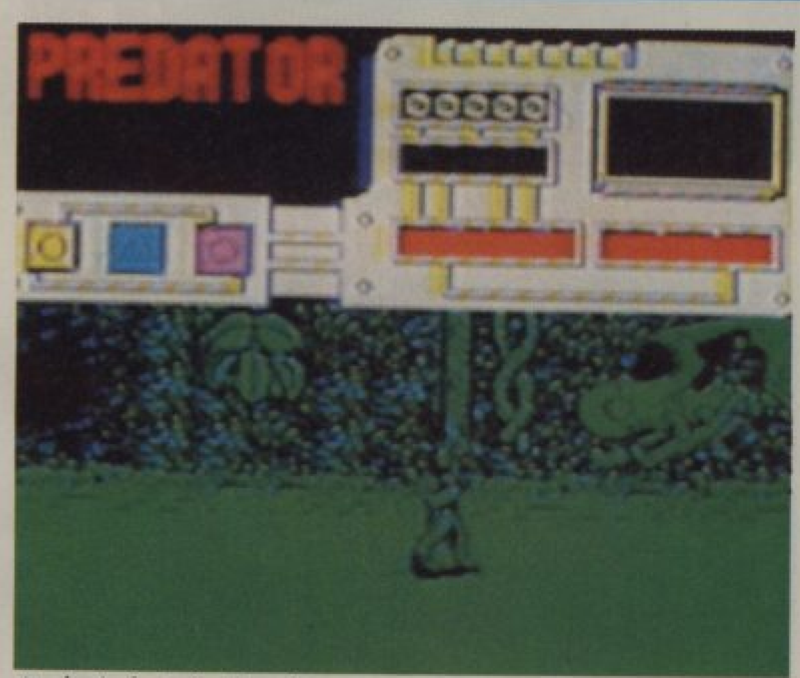
If you crash on one of the events – and this is quite hard to do as most mid-air collisions merely result in a slowing down and a loss of time – your plane splutters and


▲ *Another crash – but worth it for the view.*


▲ *A bad landing – in a tree!*


▲ *On the trail of a competitor.*

PREDA



▲ *Arnie S. stalks the alien.*

► MACHINES: CBM 64/AMSTRAD /SPECTRUM/ATARI ST.
► SUPPLIER: ACTIVISION.
► PRICE: £9.99.
► VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM.
► REVIEWER: PAUL BOUGHTON.

When you play the part of Arnold Schwarzenegger in a game there's very few people at C + VG who are qualified to play the part of a mega-hunk. Except me, of course, and I modestly accepted the wimpish pleas of my colleagues to do battle with *The Predator.*

And what we have here is a pretty near faultless game-of-the-movie which actually succeeds in capturing the spirit of the film. The films basically simple plot makes an ideal game play scenario, the central character (Arnie S), an ideal game hero, and the alien, an ideal nasty.

So it's off to the jungles of South America to rescue a bunch of trapped diplomats. The opening scene shows the helicopter dropping Arnie – otherwise known as Major Alan Schaefer and his six battle-hardened troops into the danger zone. The men sprint off into the jungle. Dutch Schaefer is the last to leave the chopper.

Within seconds you find a dead colleague and enemy troops coming for you. But the troops are only part of your worries. There's The Predator to deal with, an alien creature from outer space who is on a hunting expedition to earth. Everybody – including you – is fair game. Let us prey!

You start off equiped with a

AIR RALLY

starts to drop, a picture of you parachuting to safety appears and... WHAM! Hold your breath... did you land between some young girl's legs (True!) or – and this is far more likely – in with the pigs?

Once you complete a level – four events – a presentation screen is displayed, but you have to do numerous levels to get the full rewards. This is, as you have probably guessed, a comparatively simple game, given life by the high standards of the well drawn and convincing graphics. Lacking laser blasts and a variety of very different backdrops, it relies on the addictive qualities of the very simple basic idea of the game to retain the interest.

What this means is it lacks the special touch that would make it stand out from the rest, and would probably do better as a budget title that at its current asking price. However, if we had a mark out of ten for atmosphere – the very nicely produced packaging adds to this too – Gee Bee Air Rally would probably come near the top of the heap.

The lack of reality about crashes, in the early stages of the games, you can zoom around with wild abandon, clipping the wings of other planes, swooping down on the course markers and

So to sum up. Gee Bee Air Rally has some great graphics, nice touches of humour great music and sound. One could only want for a little more playability. However, an enjoyable game.

6

►GRAPHICS	7
►SOUND	8
►VALUE	5
►PLAYABILITY	6



▲ Decisions. Who dares ... crashes?



▲ The grand parade.



▲ Making a pig's ear of the race?

machine gun, a limited supply of bullets and hand grenades. In a tight corner you can also punch, block and duck.

Caution is the key word in this game. Don't rush in blindly. Even if you survive the nasty surprises, you'll probably use up your ammo too soon.

Besides the troops, there's a sniper in a crash chopper and death-dealing vultures to contend with.

You can tell when the alien is tracking you because the screen goes pink and a large triangle appears, moving closer to you all the time. At this stage it's best to run like hell and get away.

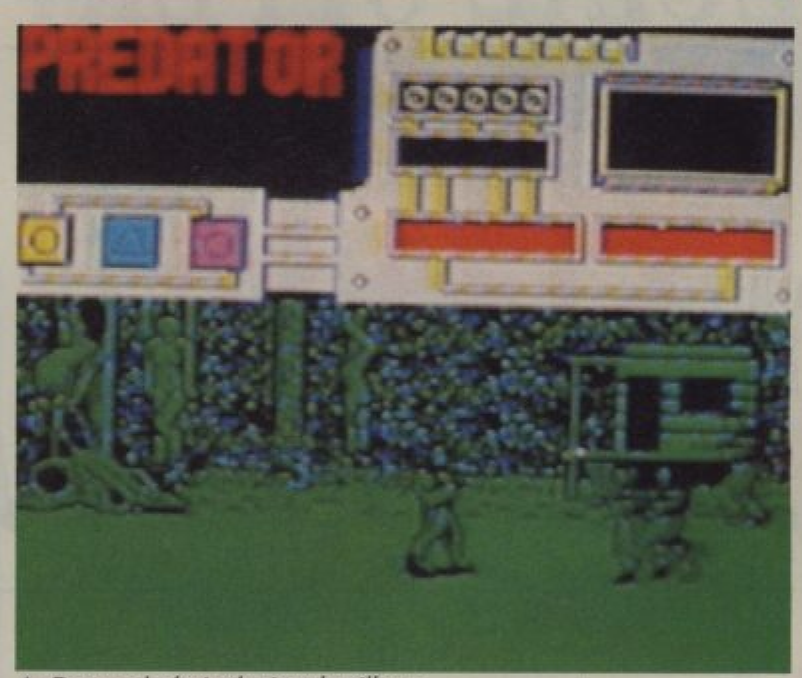
There are four stages to battle through before you get to the final confrontation with *The Predator*. As you progress you can pick up extra weapons, mostly off the bodies of your fallen comrades.

I have only two gripes about *Predator*. Firstly that it's multi-load. I know this is necessary but it results in an easing of the tension – and this game, like the film, is nothing if not tension with a capital T. Secondly, when you have lost all your lives you have to go through the starting sequence which involves all the men jumping from the helicopter. This becomes a little boring.

All in all, *Predator* is an excellent game where the hunter becomes the hunted. Buy it and experience fear.

► GRAPHICS	9
► SOUND	6
► VALUE	8
► PLAYABILITY	9



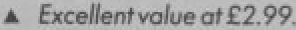


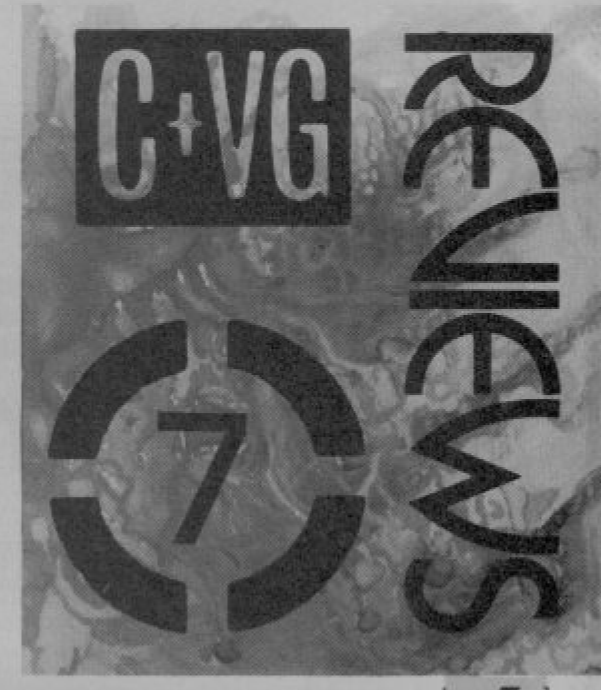
▲ Danger lurks in the jungle village.



- ► MACHINE: SPECTRUM.
- ► SUPPLIER: FIRBIRD.
- ► PRICE: £2.99.
- ► REVIEWER: PAUL BOUGHTON.




▲ *Excellent value at £2.99.*



ZARAX

"Get 'em!" Stark advice from the starting screen of *Xarax*. But my advice to you is: Get it!

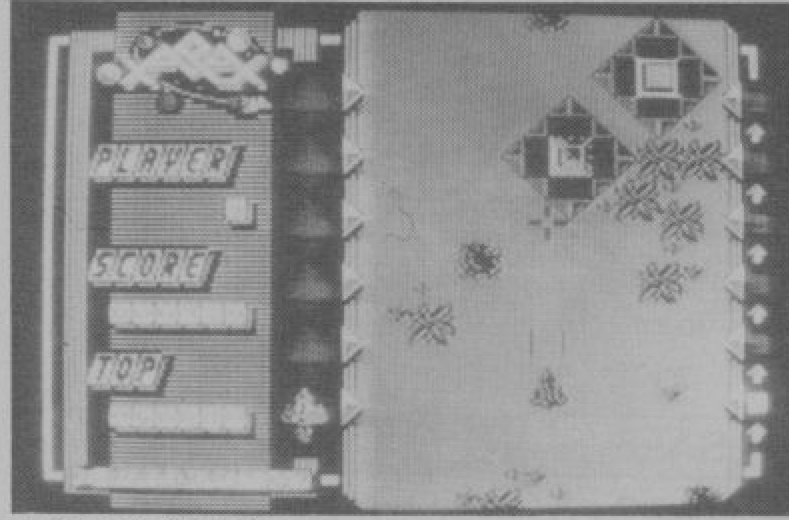
This is one hell of a nifty shoot 'em up that deserves your attention. And at £2.99 it a *street-wise buy as well.*

There's really not a lot to tell you about this game. The cassette notes are, to say the least, sparse: "Bomb and blast the way to the salvation of your world." Highly informative, I don't think.

But let's press on. You control a space ship flying over a vertically scrolling landscape. The inevitable flying aliens are soon proving right little pests.



▲ *Bomb the ground installations.*



▲ *Dodge the flying aliens.*

ZARAX

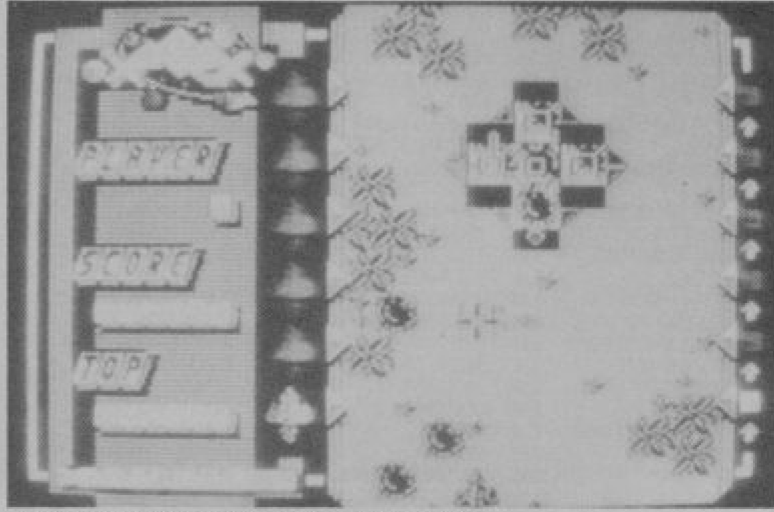
The first wave comes whirling past in a sort of looping formation, fast and frequent. Matters are complicated by ground installations which deal death at you.

But fear not. It's not just your flying skills which will keep you out of trouble, although quick reactions are vital.

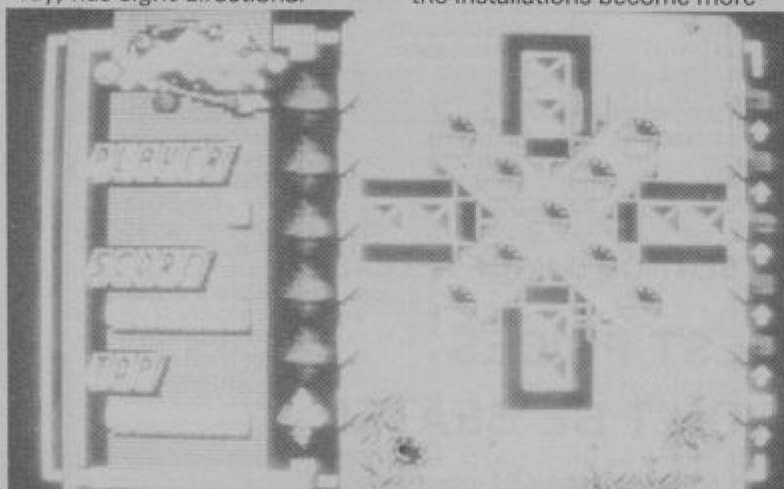
The spacecraft, which by the way, has eight directional movement, is equipped with unlimited laser power and bombs. The lasers can only be used on the airborne enemy while the grenades are more than enough to take out any ground-based problems you come across. And they will prove to be problems.

The craft has a cross-hair sight in front of it which allows you to zero in for ground attacks with quite a degree of accuracy.

As you progress into the game the installations become more complex. Instead of just one bolt of death heading your way, there's a whole barrage.



▲ *Unlimited firepower keeps you in the game.*



▲ *Ground installations vary in size.*

And that's basically the game. What makes it special is the price. In fact, in terms of quality programming, *Xarax* is a lot better than a lot of the full price shoot 'em ups doing the rounds at the moment. God forbid that we would name names but have you seen Go's *Bedlam*?

It's possible Firebird could have put this out a higher price. But that's their blunder and your good fortune. Don't look a gift horse in the mouth, as they say.

Finally, congratulations to programmers R. Spahl and T. Gittelbauer. *Xarax* is a job well done.

► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	6
► VALUE	10
► PLAYABILITY	8

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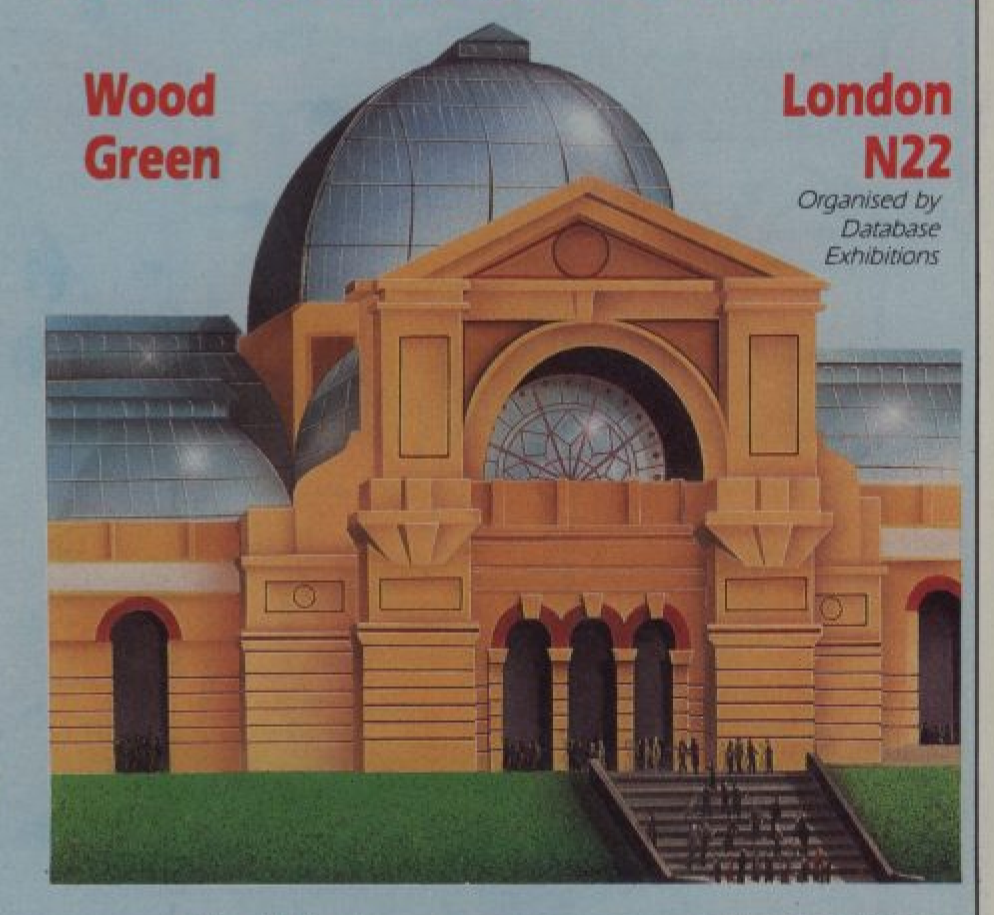
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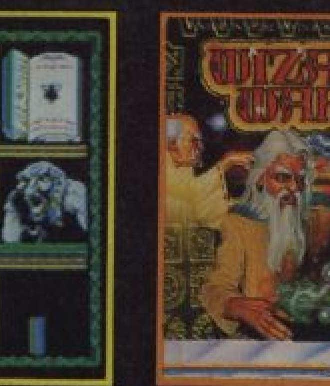
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► MACHINE: COMMODORE 64.
► SUPPLIER: FIREBIRD.
► PRICE: £9.99.
► VERSION TESTED: COMMODORE 64.
► REVIEWER: MATT BIELBY.

Io can justifiably claim to be the definitive scrolling shoot 'em up. In the all time hall of scrolling shoot 'em up fame you have to class it in the *Sanxion, Delta* and *Zynapse* class.

Maybe in playability terms it is just about on the same level as *Zynapse*, but graphically *IO* is way ahead of all three of these.

Firebird has sensibly dispensed with plot and scenario – *Io* is about blasting the wondrous aliens that come at you.

As with most games of this type you have to build the firepower of your ship to have any hope of surviving.

You do this by shooting certain glowing orbs that are dotted around the game at intervals. When they absorb a set amount of missile fire they turn into duplicate ships that you fly into. This will add first one, then two, and finally three extra bullets – increasing your rate of shot rather than adding extra weapons to the ship.

When you have built the ship up to maximum fire power you can still get two more orbs to add protective orbs. These effectively add extra lives. If you die then you lose one of your orbs – not the ship itself. Collecting these orbs is therefore as important as clearing the path of aliens. The orbs also add two extra guns – which you will need when you confront the final alien at the end of each level.

There are four levels in *Io* – which doesn't sound like an awful lot but believe me once you have struggled with the joystick for hours before getting anywhere like near the end of the first level, you will know that there is enough here to keep you blasting for a very long while. If anything, the game might have benefited from being slightly less difficult.

Level One is set in a futuristic city-scape – with monrails at the top and bottom of the screen. Along these rails move blue metalic aliens which spit flak at you. There is a huge worm that twists and spins its segmented body all over the screen – making for a formidable opponent. Two sputnik aliens shoot past you, spraying a trail of spheres at you as the 64 emits a splendid whooshing sound.

The second level is set against a weird, alien-like forrest, with tulip like plants spitting flak at you. A huge skull is the horrible monster that confronts you at the end of this level. If you are skilled enough to waste him, you will see the red rocky background of level three. More weird and wonderful aliens here – including a giant laser that has to be blasted section by section before it will let you pass to the final level.

The fourth and final level is a slimy mesh of blue fibrous-like material. This is the most *R-Type-like* level of the game and owes an obvious debt to the mega-successful Irem coin-op.

Io is the work of two well known Compunet art page supremo's – Bob Stevenson and Douglas Hare.

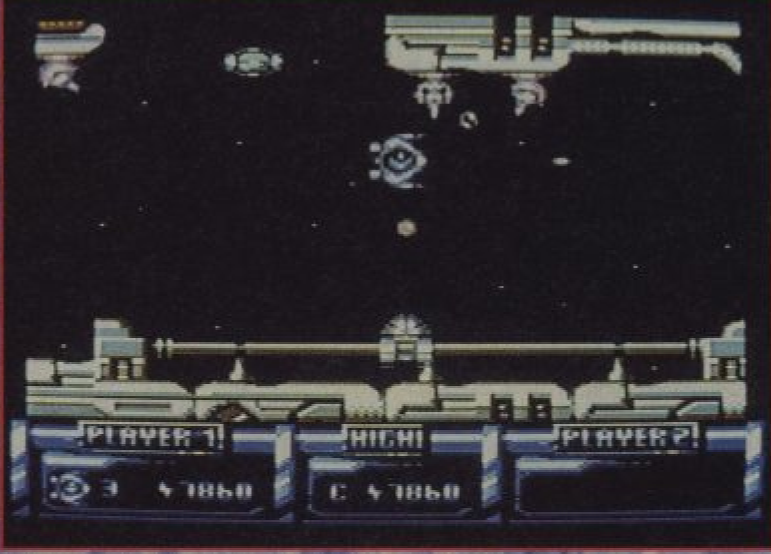
If you like shoot 'em ups, you will not want to be without *Io* – it is one of the best.



▲ *One of best shoot 'em-ups we've seen for C64.*



▲ *Let those aliens have it!*



▲ *If you like blast'ems, don't miss this one.*



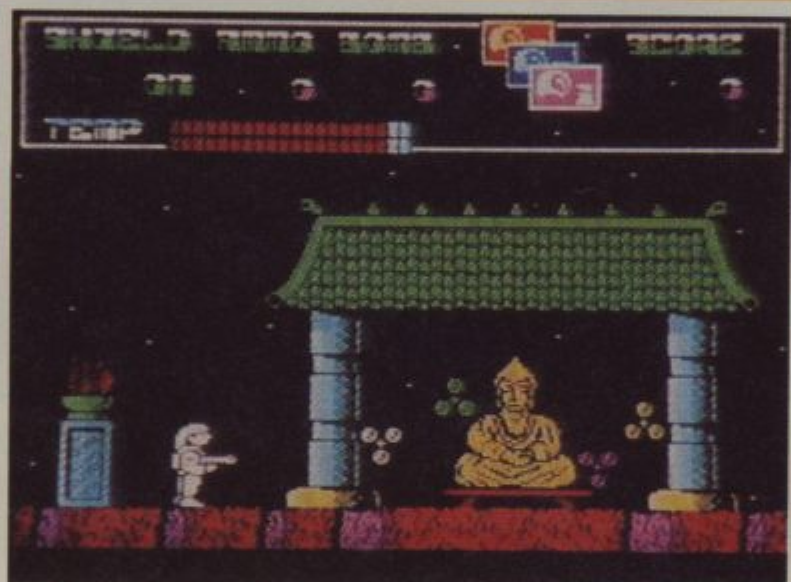
▲ *Surrounded and running low on fire power . . ?*

► GRAPHICS	9
► SOUND	7
► VALUE	8
► PLAYABILITY	8



YETI

► MACHINE: SPECTRUM/CBM 64.
► SUPPLIER: DESTINY.
► PRICE: £8.95
► VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM
► REVIEWER: PAUL.



▲ *Because the Buddha . . .*

From the land of mountains, ice and snow comes a legend that has intrigued people for ages, stories of a huge hairy beast, a giant mysterious creature whose existence has never been conclusively proved or denied. It's the Abominable Snowman or Yeti.

And so enters Destiny, a new name on the software scene, and programmer Christian Urquhart, and old industry stalwart, with a quest to discover this mythical creature.

Armed with a rifle and grenades — those twin tools of scientific exploration — you set out to hunt and capture the Yeti.

Every now and then you get a tantalising glimpse of the Yeti but he — or she — scampers off before you can do anything about it. It is not until the fourth level of the game that you can actual confront the elusive creature.

Until then you must trek through snow, blizzards and into forbidden territory where outsiders are made to feel decidedly unwelcome. Leading the unwelcoming committee are sullen Buddhas which protect the pathways, flinging death-dealing lightning bolts. Then there are the mad monks who rush straight at you. These must be blasted until they change colour before they die.

Also watch out for spikes. Don't worry if you don't get the point of them. You soon will! There are also cravasses, hidden beneath the surface, waiting for a real fall guy.

The explorer starts out with 50 rounds of ammunition and 10 grenades, three lives and a body temperature which must not fall too low.

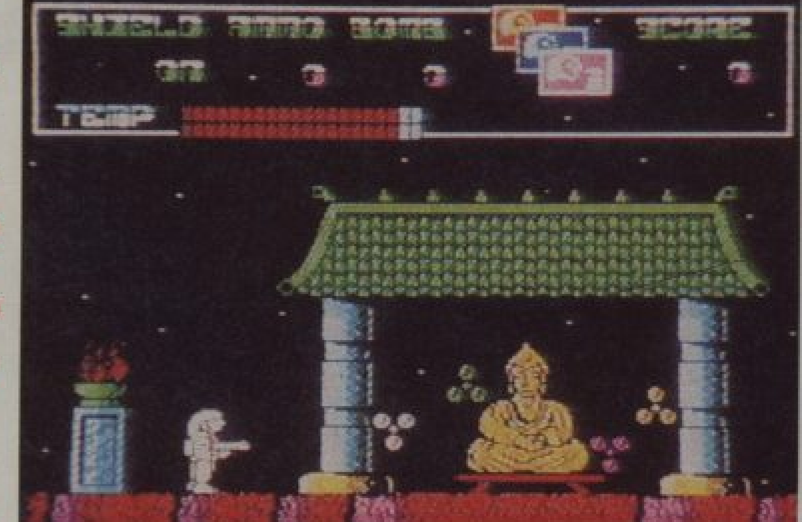
Along the way, he can replenish his ammunition and grenades. There is also a mystical fluid to be found which will restore body temperature.

And one of the most useful items to find is the ski-bike. This can really speed up your progress through this frozen landscape.

Shields are also useful while they last. They protect against a lot of nasties, other than craggy rocks and lightning bolts.

Yeti, together with *Teladon*, are the first two releases from Destiny. *Yeti* is a very competent game, nicely programmed and very playable, even if it doesn't set the imagination really alight.

► GRAPHICS	7
► REALISM	5
► VALUE	7
► PLAYABILITY	7



▲ *. . . and his lightning bolts.*

POWER AT SEA

► MACHINE: CBM 64.
► SUPPLIER: ELECTRONIC ARTS.
► PRICE: £19.95 (DISK).
► REVIEWER: STEVE BADSEY.

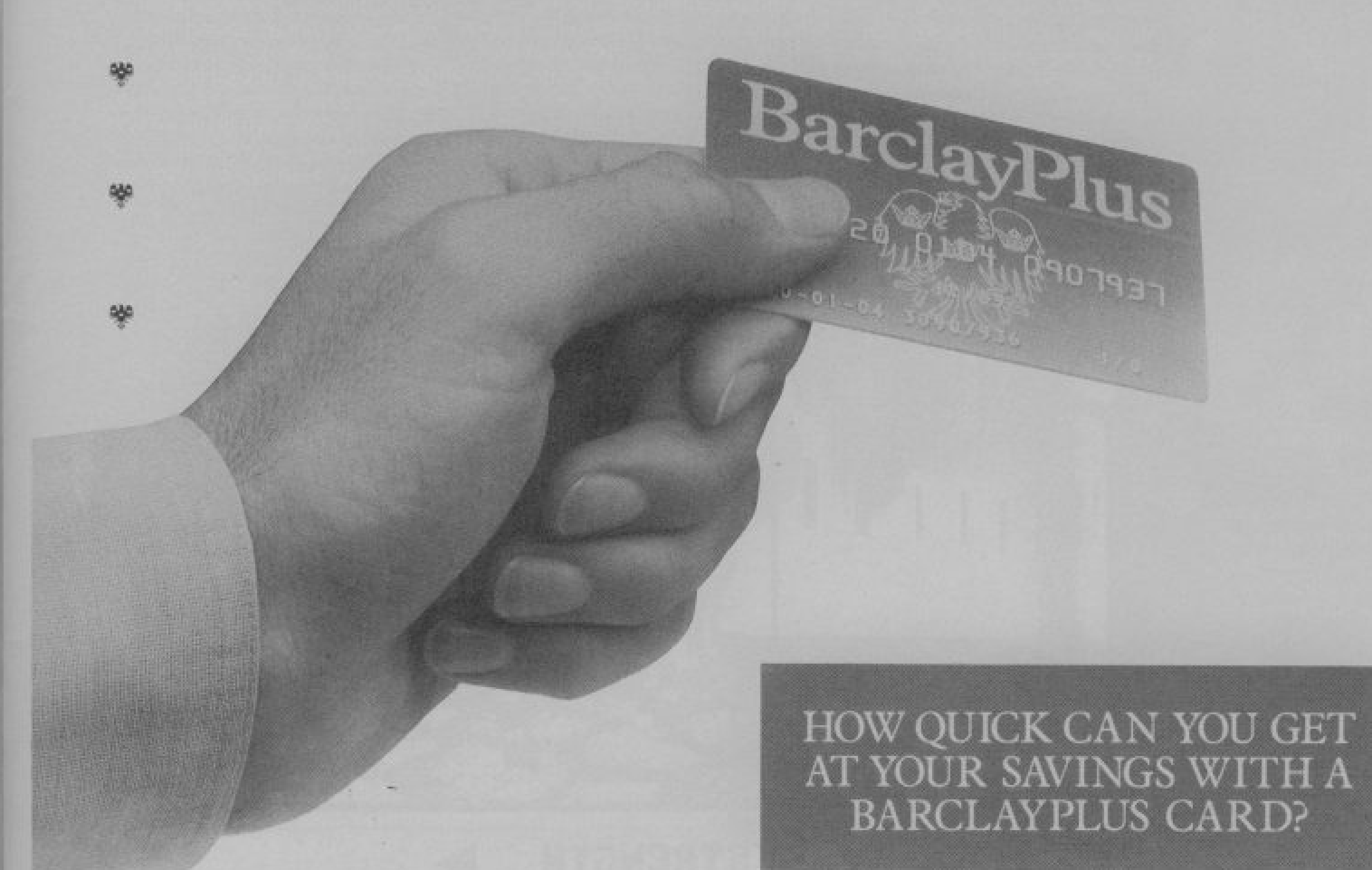
Power at Sea is a one player game of sea warfare based on the American fleet at the battle of Leyte Gulf in 1944. The American task was to capture island strongpoints by amphibious landing against opposing Japanese sea and air forces, including for the first time the *Kamikaze* suicide attacks.

Anyone expecting a serious strategy game will be disappointed. *Power at Sea* bears only the most fanciful relation to the real events of Leyte Gulf. But if you like good graphics, good sound and an undemanding shoot-em-up, then this will be one of the best games for you! The player commands from the bridge of an American battleship, with an aircraft carrier and cargo freighter in support. Four Japanese bases must be weakened by bombarding them from the sea, knocking out strongpoints before sending in the marines to capture them. At any time you may have to man the guns against Japanese air attacks, or fly off an airstrike against interfering Japanese destroyers.

Picking and destroying targets in this game is not particularly taxing, nor is it very fast, but you do have to be accurate. The real joy of the game are the graphics screens of the battleship bridge, the Japanese bases and destroyers, and your own gun positions. This is the sort of fame that even quite young players will enjoy, and only a killjoy would complain about its lack of realism.

► GRAPHICS	9
► SOUND	9
► VALUE	8
► PLAYABILITY	8




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KNIGHT GAMES II

► MACHINE: C64.
► SUPPLIER: ENGLISH SOFTWARE.
► PRICE: £9.95.
► REVIEWER: IAN MACHIN.

Knight Games 2 is the first in a series of sequels that continues where the original *Knight Games* left off. But this time the games are being held 2,000 years later. Under the new title Space Trilogy *Knight Games* has been given a new and different concept – Space Combat Gaming.

This really entails completing set of three distinctly separate combat games, each with a rather exhilarating purpose . . . to win and move on. This may sound all that easy and simple to you, but believe me – it isn't.

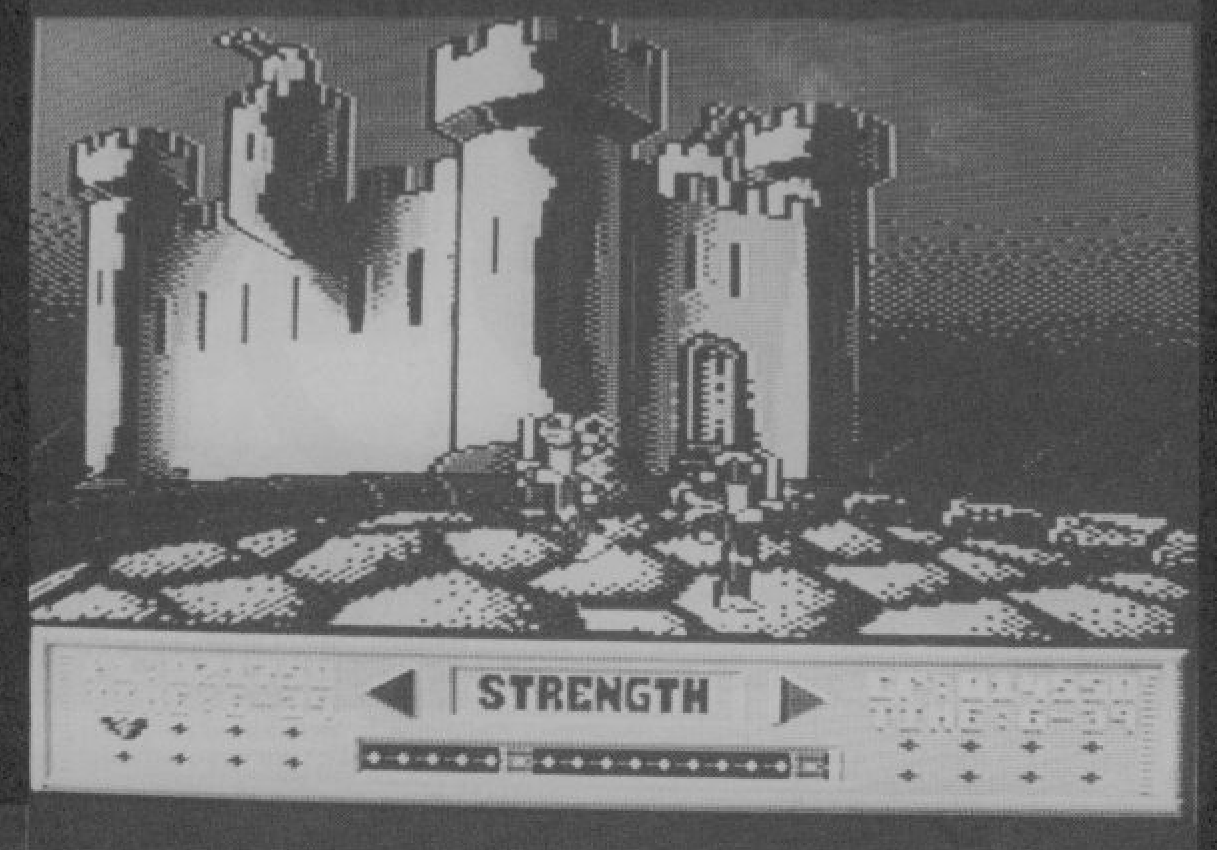
All the games are loaded into the computer separately. But before this can be done, an Access/Bypass code must be given. This is achieved by filling your main energy meter to a maximum by transferring any remaining reserves which maybe left over at the end of each stage of each game. There is approximately three different screened stages in each of the three games, giving a total of nine separate screens. Once the code has been accessed . . . you may proceed.

You are in control of a small robot named 'Robby' (now where have I heard that name before). Using Robby . . . you are instructed to do battle against a number of hostile aliens. Equipped with only a Photon Laser, your aim is to complete all three games (or challenges) in such a way . . . that when reaching the final tournament, you have succeeded in becoming the winner. And therefore, look forward to the release of the future *Knight Game* games.

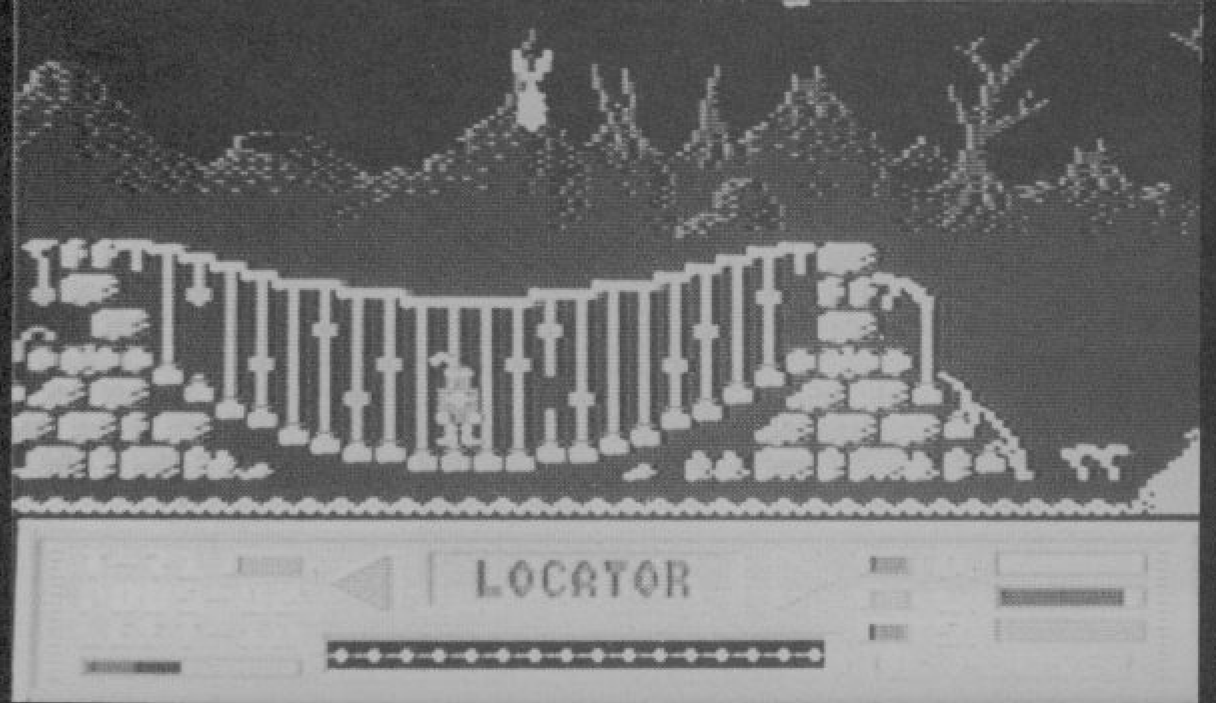
Now onto the basic description of each game.

In this first instalment of Space Gaming, Robby the Robot must pick up and collect stranded (Goodie) aliens and Robo-Knights off the surface of a hostile alien inhabited planet, and take them back to his launchpad. To retrieve each alien or Robo-Knight, just hover just above it, while all the time keeping in constant Sprite to Sprite contact, and after four tiny bleep noises have sounded the character in question should disappear. Once your guest has been deposited back to the launchpad . . . you must locate and find the next one . . . and quick!

Game two involves you . . . and a whole host of enemy alien attackers battling it out in orbit around the planet as seen in game on. To help you to become aware of any incoming enemy craft, there is a forward and rearview scanner. Using the scanner is essential . . . that is . . . if you want to survive and complete the game. You are also supplied with a small quantity of Smart bombs which then triggered, destroys everything on screen.



▲ *Trial by battle.*



▲ *Hidden Perils?*

The third and final tournament is a feat in itself as all the games are increasingly difficult.

Here . . . you play three events in succession. Your aim is to: defeat your opponent (this can be either the computer . . . or player two) and achieve the highest score.

The three events in question are . . . Jet Jousting, Light Sabres and last of all . . . Photon Chains.

All the events are very demanding to ones patience . . . and need to be practiced a couple of times before actually pledging any devotion to them.

GRAPHICS:	9
SOUND:	8
PLAYABILITY:	9
VALUE:	8



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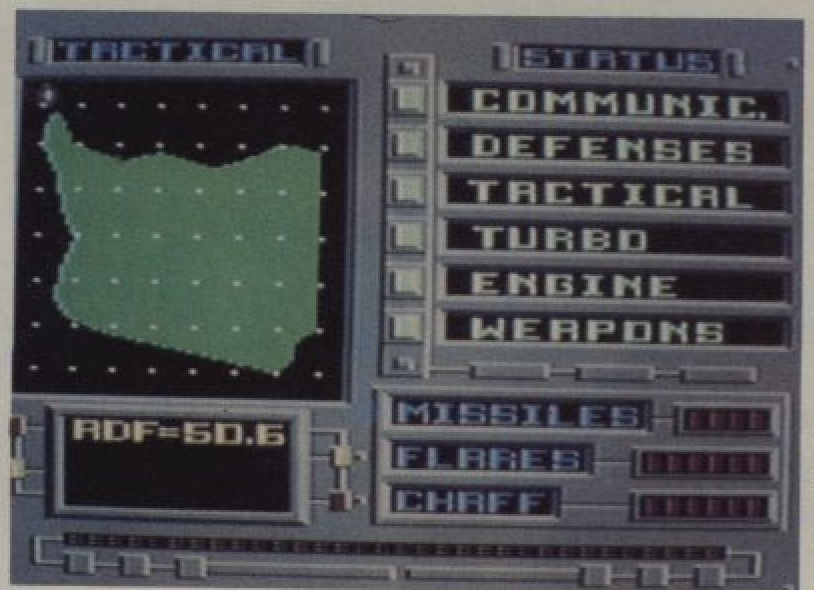
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▲ *Enter the missile room and deactivate the bombs.*

► MACHINE: C64/128, APPLE II, IBM AND COMPATIBLES.
► SUPPLIER: MINDSCAPE.
► PRICE: C64 DISC (£14.95).
► VERSION TESTED: C64.
► REVIEWER: IAN MACHIN.



INFILTRATOR II

Infiltrator II is the continuing story of the diabolical Mad Leader who is hell-bent on world domination.

Our hero, Johnny "Jimbo-Baby" McGibbits has been assigned a mission of great importance – to destroy him.

Here's a short run-down on this most critical mission . . .

As Johnny, it is your task to fly a helicopter behind enemy lines to a specified destination, successfully complete a ground assignment within the Mad Leader's installations, and fly on back to Home Base. This has to be done three times, although all specific destinations and goals are different to that described above.

Mission one has you searching the Mad Leader's installation for chemical labs in which vats of deadly nerve gas is being formulated. Here, you must fly in and neutralize these vats before it's distributed around the world.

The flight sequence in this mission only is optional. You are able to skip it by making the appropriate selection on the mission menu that appears after the title screen.

This selection will not appear on the mission menu of the other two missions.

Within this and the other missions, you are equipped with a selection of apparatus which is essential to your missions and must be used with great caution and accuracy. You will also find extra equipment as you travel through the complexes such as Gas Grenades, Alarm Keycards and Security card passes with which you get into the unauthorized areas where your main objectives are located, behind locked doors.

The second mission is somewhat harder and you'll need to make use of a couple of your special items to resolve this problem.

What you must do is this – discover all the Mad Leader's missile rooms and deactivate them. Also locate and cause a meltdown of the Mad Leader's nuclear reactor. As if this should pose a problem.

When you have found your objectives, you are instructed to present a four-digit disable code number. All this sounds so easy but you must permanently type-in guessed numbers into the missile decoder, and hope each time that you have made the right guess. The Reactor is much simpler to destroy.

Mission three sounds easy but it turns out to be quite the opposite. Here, your objective is to seek out and find the Mad Leader himself, install a small brain implant in his noodle (pretty talented guy this Johnny!) and return for the third and final time to Home Base. To find the right Mr Mad Leader you must use your Brain scanning device to determine who's who.

All these characters will be sitting down in a chair and will therefore be easy to spot.

When in the flight sequence, flying your helicopter is no easy task. You must keep a close eye on not only your instruments but also on any enemy and allied aircraft.

Air traffic can be rather dense at times and if you are spotted, they will request some ID. As soon as you have taken-off, you must program the on-board computer with the destination co-ordinates' otherwise you shall be flying blind and aimlessly.

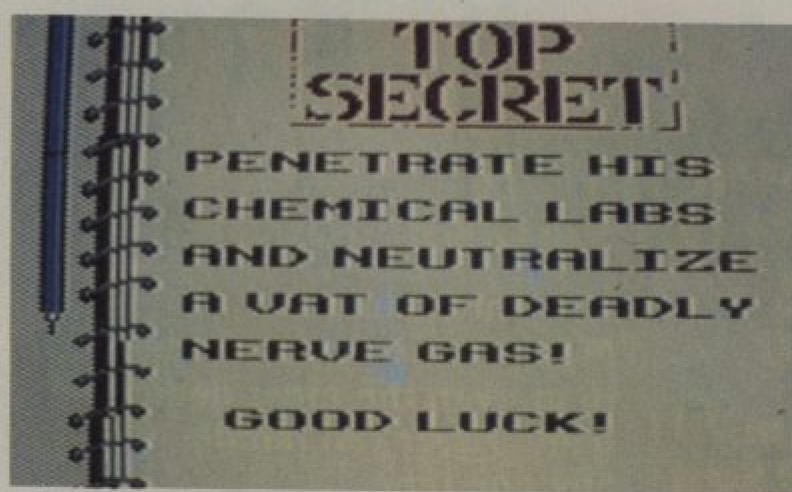
In all of your ground missions, it is essential for you to find and use, correctly, an assortment of security and alarm key cards.

The thing that strikes you first when you load up the game is its similarity to the original *Infiltrator*.

There is no difference at all between the two except, that is, *Infiltrator II* has greater playability and a lot more screens to play around in.

Although *Infiltrator II* is extremely hard and you can very easily get rather fed up with it. *Infiltrator II* has, more or less, no draw-backs at all, and is still worth playing.

► GRAPHICS	9
► SOUND	7
► PLAYABILITY	9
► VALUE	8



Your mission is clear – can you succeed?



▲ *Take hold of the controls and go get the bad Mad Leader.*

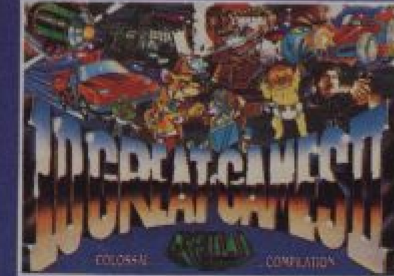


▲ *Infiltrator involves reaching for nerve gas as well as flying helicopters.*

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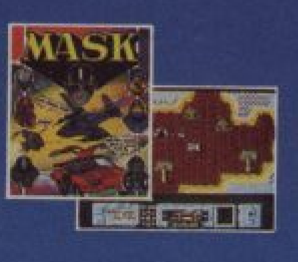
THE DUCT
Zoom your way through a network of tunnels in your buggy avoiding the myriad of hazards that race to meet you, beware the Aliens and barriers that move around the circumference of the DUCT.



AUF WIEDERSEHEN MONTY
Lying low in Gibraltar, poor persecuted Monty Mole's whereabouts have been leaked to 'Intermole', who are in hot pursuit.



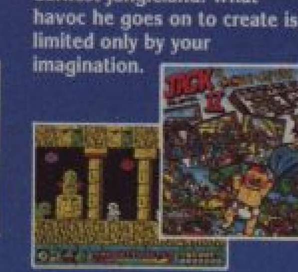
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Join with the forces of MASK, skilfully commanded by Matt Trakker and combat the villainous VENOM in their quest for domination of the world.



DEATH WISH 3
Modern day vigilante Paul Kersey wreaks his own form of revenge on the scum and filth that terrorise the streets of New York.



JACK THE NIPPER IN COCONUT CAPERS
Banished to Australia, our favourite little horror jumps plane to land in deepest, darkest jungleland. What havoc he goes on to create is limited only by your imagination.



BULLDOG
Blast your way through infinite levels of high speed space action, penetrating your enemies outer defence system to reach and destroy the POLON mothership.



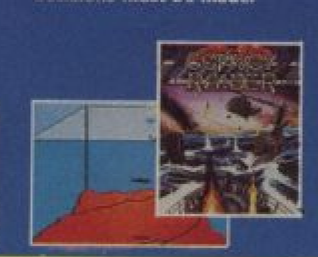
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BASIL THE GREAT MOUSE DETECTIVE
Will your powers of deduction be enough to enable Basil to rescue Dr Dawson from the villainous clutches of Professor Ratigan?



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In an age in which honour was revered, a class of warriors set themselves apart to dedicate their lives to a perfection in combat and discipline of mind that became a religion.

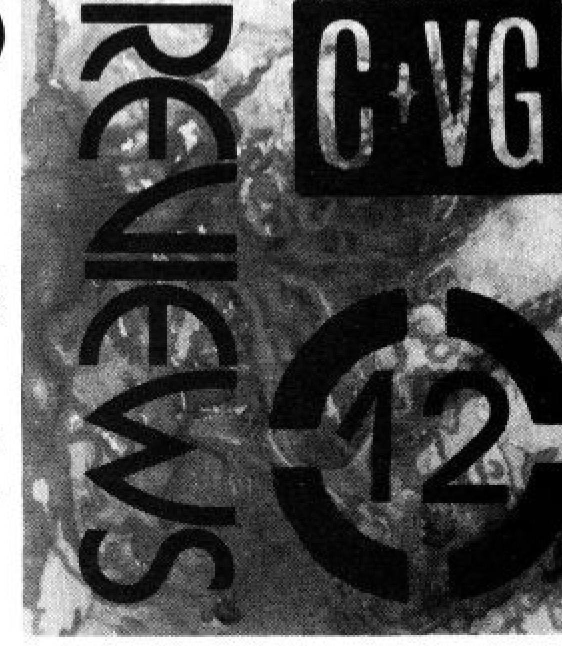
RE-BOUNDER
Armed to the teeth, challenge the might of the meddling overlord, to return to a happy-go-lucky life as a B...B...Bounder.



Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd.,
Alpha House, 10 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS.
Tel: (0742) 753423



Screen shots from various formats.



THE TRAIN

► **MACHINE:** CBM 64/128.
► **SUPPLIER:** ACCOLADE/ ELECTRONIC ARTS.
► **PRICE:** £14.99 DISK.
► **REVIEWER:** STEVE BADSEY.

This is an adventure game for one player, set in World War Two and based loosely on an old film on the same name. As a member of the French Resistance you must capture a train loaded with precious works of art from the Germans, and drive it through the night along the railway network into Allied hands (actually from Metz to Verdun, which is about as close to Normandy as Leeds is to London).

You must stop at all bridges and destroy the gunboats guarding them before they destroy you. You can simply run through a station, but if you stop to take it you can contact the local resistance, who might change the points or capture another station ahead for you. Occasionally you get attacked by German aircraft. You are scored on the amount of undamaged art you bring out.

The heart of this game is a graphics screen of the engine cab, with joystick selection of controls. This works well, and learning to control the train's speed and performance is very enjoyable.

▼ *The graphics of the Train are good, the game play is not!*

The rest of the game is less impressive. Capturing bridges or stations is far too easy, needing only "hosepipe" firing from your trusty machine gun. Also, the game seems to have been put out too early, since some of the routines just don't work. Information or assistance from the Resistance, for example, can be faulty. This is not just part of the game, since the computer blames you for failing to pay attention to the correct information which you haven't been given! Since the switching system also doesn't work, and you have to follow the same track each time, the game gets monotonous very quickly.

Without the complexity of a real adventure or the sublety of a proper wargame, *The Train* is an average sort of game. It helps if you like old trains.

► GRAPHICS	8
► REALISM	4
► VALUE	4
► PLAYABILITY	4

4TH & INCHES

► **MACHINE:** CBM 64/128.
► **SUPPLIER:** US GOLD.
► **PRICE:** £9.99 Cass/£14.99 disk.
► **REVIEWER:** STEVE BADSEY.

4th & Inches is one of the better American football simulators now on the market, but you need to know the rules of the real game very well before you start playing.

This is a one or two player game in which joystick options let you select a play from a selection of five, then an intended receiver or blitzer, and finally a player to control. You can see your opponent's options, but not which one has been selected.

The graphics representing the players and field are good. The only drawback is that you can't look downfield to see if a receiver is clear – and you have to throw to your intended receiver (although bootlegging is possible) so quite often a pass is wasted.

Fortunately the computer, otherwise a tough opponent, plays zone defense, so there are some plays which are virtually guaranteed to work against it on a timing pattern. Fumbles are not possible – except on an onside kick – and nor are false starts or delay of game, since the 30 second clock simply stops if you try it.

Interception is possible, but you need to have picked the nearest defensive back to reach the ball. Some trick plays are allowed for but not others. You can have screen passes and fake field goals, but not a reverse play, and only the quarterback can throw.



▲ *4th & Inches is a complex simulation, for hard-core fans only.*

The computer keeps no statistics, so it is sometimes hard to see if your strategy is working. Within those limits *4th & Inches* gives you an excellent game of football.

I told you that you needed to know the game well, didn't I? But if you like the real game, you'll love this version.

► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	5
► VALUE	9
► PLAYABILITY	8

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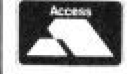
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TROLL

► MACHINE: CBM 64.
► SUPPLIER: OUTLAW.
► PRICE: £9.95 (cass)/£12.99 (disc).
► REVIEWER: PAUL BOUGHTON.

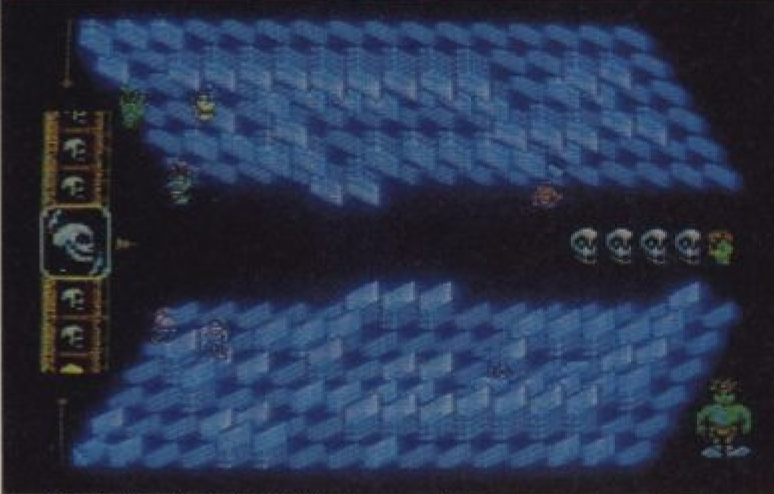
There are very few times when you come across a game which fails to fit at least partially into the well-established categories of computer games. But such a game is *Troll*, the second release from Palace offshoot, Outlaw, the people who produced the highly-acclaimed *Shoot 'Em Up Construction Kit*.

It has elements of arcade adventure, strategy, a maze game and collecting items. And yet none of these is the dominant feature. They all mesh together to produce something unique.

The *Troll* of the game title is Humgruffin who has stumbled into the netherworld of Narc, a land of crystal caverns and populated by malevolent goblins. He can only return to his own world by finding the crystal key in each level and returning it to its place in the magic amulet.

The screen has two playing areas, top and bottom. They are almost but not quite mirror images of each other. Gruff can move between them by finding what appear to be pointed pyramids which catapult him back and forth. He needs to do this because the hidden crystals can be hidden anywhere.

Now this becomes more



▲ *The Troll explores the upside down world.*



▲ *Troll is now carrying blue holes.*



▲ *Bad Dream – start of Frightmare.*



▲ *Bad Vision – which weapon to use.*

FRIGHTMARE

► MACHINES: SPECTRUM/ CBM 64/AMSTRAD/IBM.
► SUPPLIER: CASCADE.
► PRICE: £9.95/£14.95. (SPECTRUM/AMSTRAD/ CBM 64O/£19.95).
► VERSION TESTED: CBM 64.
► REVIEWER: PAUL BOUGHTON.

They're ghosts in the machine, a malevolent maelstrom of menacing spirits and ghouls. The creatures of the night are running rampant. And like a bad dream there's no escape, only the hope that you'll wake up and survive. But don't count on it.

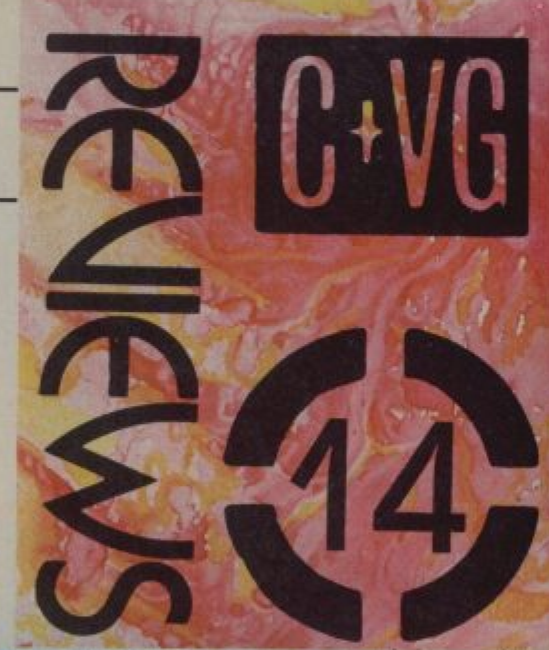
Welcome to Cascade's *Frightmare*, the only game that invites you to say a prayer before playing: "Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take."

Up until now Cascade has built its reputation – and probably fortune – on *Ace I* and *II*, the excellent flight simulations. Their other releases have failed to match this standard. But now comes *Frightmare*, a tasty little game, with quality touches, superbly creepy music and wonderful graphics touches.

Okay, it's basically a platform and ladders game, a format used on computer games for what seems eons. But this game proves there's still a bit or originality and style to be squeezed out.

There are basically two objectives to *Frightmare*. Firstly to wake up. You do this by moving the time, displayed on the screen, from midnight to 8.12 am. Each "dream" you manage to visit will advance the time by six minutes. Secondly you have to raise your "dream state" from the lowly Bad Dream up to Nefarious Nightmare.

These dream states are shown by two words – an adjective and noun. For instance, Cruel Illusion. There are 15 adjectives, beginning from the rather mild and innocent Bad to the frightening Nefarious. Scoring points changes the colour of the letters in the adjective and noun. When all the letters have changed colour, the adjective changes. When all 15 adjectives



complicated to explain. As Gruff moves around the playing areas he encounters the goblins. These do not kill him but they do build walls which can restrict his movements. Indeed it is very easy to become trapped.

And now we come to the subject of holes. Gruff can move from level to level by producing a hole from his pocket, throwing it on the ground and jumping through it.

But not all holes are friendly holes. Some will cause death. The type of hole which is available is dictated by the fruit machine style wheel at the left-hand side of the screen.

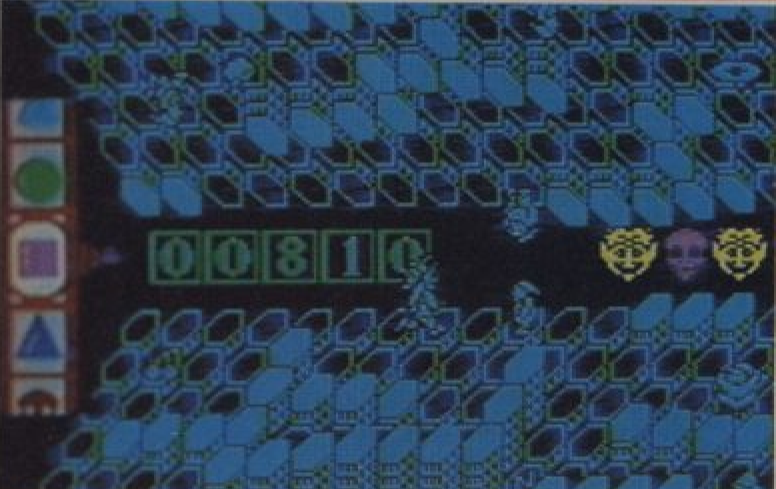
Occasionally toadstools sprout from the playing surface. If Gruff can jump up and down on this it will summon Fjalar the dwarf. He climbs down a rope onto the wheel and moves it round a little. That means the type of hole is constantly changing. Confused? Of course you are. And just to add to that confusion it's time to mention the roving death hole. This moves around the screen providing a mobile trap for Gruff. Sometimes it's hard to see because it may be hidden behind the wall built by the goblins. Indeed that is often the case for the many objects to be found.

Troll is certainly a brave try at a different sort of game. I'm not sure if it's not a little too clever and playability may have been sacrificed. This is definitely a game you should try and play before buying.

► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	8
► VALUE	7
► PLAYABILITY	7



▲ *The skull denotes danger and death.*



▲ *The goblins build the walls higher.*



▲ *Shadowy Dream — trapped by a spirit.*



▲ *Bad Dream — the gun is the first weapon to find.*

have been used, it's then on to the next dream state.

The game is packed with creatures, ghouls, spirits, zombies, werewolves and the like. There are also, as you would expects weapons and useful items to collect.

Other "surprises" include an embalmed Egyptian Pharoah set on killing all that lies between him and the experience of death that has so far eluded him; Wolf-Men who have been condemned to eternity; Swamp Monsters that are seeking their next meal; Transylvanian family who have evaded death and rise from the earth as Zombies.

Weapons available include: Holy Water that will exterminate skulls, Medusa, Bats and a watch that slows down all monsters. This can only be used once, so choose the moment carefully. There is also a Crucifix that enables you to freeze Zombies, Serpents, Willo' The Wisps and a Revolver and bullets which are collected separately. Up to 20 bullets can be held at one time which can be used to kill numerous monsters but some will only die after several hits; Silver Revolver and Bullets — there's only one of these and it can be used to kill additional monsters such as Zombies and Werewolves.



The collected weapons are displayed at the bottom of the screen. You can select individual weapons with the joystick. Whatever weapon is in the right hand position will be the one used.

Other things to be found around the game are wings, which increase the size of your jumps, rings for extra lives — up to five may be carried at one time —, chalice, to increase dream state rating, and transporter, whic allows you to move from screen to screen.

Special mention must be made of the music by The Judges, a Dutch band. It's excellent. Just right to send chills up your spin.

Oh, by the way, make sure you get May's *C + VG* for our special *Frightmare* Freebie giveaway.

Frightmare is definitely a step in the right direction for Cascade. But remember, sweet dreams are not made out of this . . .

► GRAPHICS	9
► SOUND	9
► VALUE	8
► PLAYABILITY	8

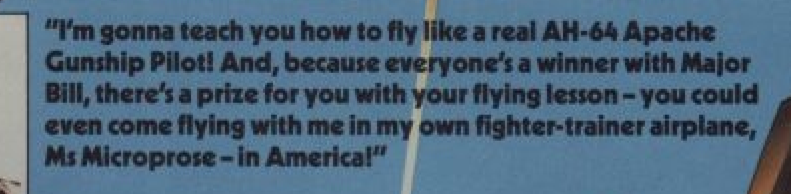
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GUADALCANAL

15

► MACHINE: CBM 64 SPECTRUM AMSTRAD CPC.
► SUPPLIER: ACTIVISION.
► PRICE: £9.99 (£14.99) DISK.
► VERSION TESTED: CBM 64.
► REVIEWER: STEVE BADSEY.

For the United States in World Ward Two capturing an island from the Japanese was not simply a case of landing troops and letting them fight. They had to be supplied, reinforced, kept free from disease, and given air cover. All this depended on keeping a sea route to the island open. Winning at Guadalcanal, captured between August 1942 and January 1943, was a matter of balancing land, air and sea forces.

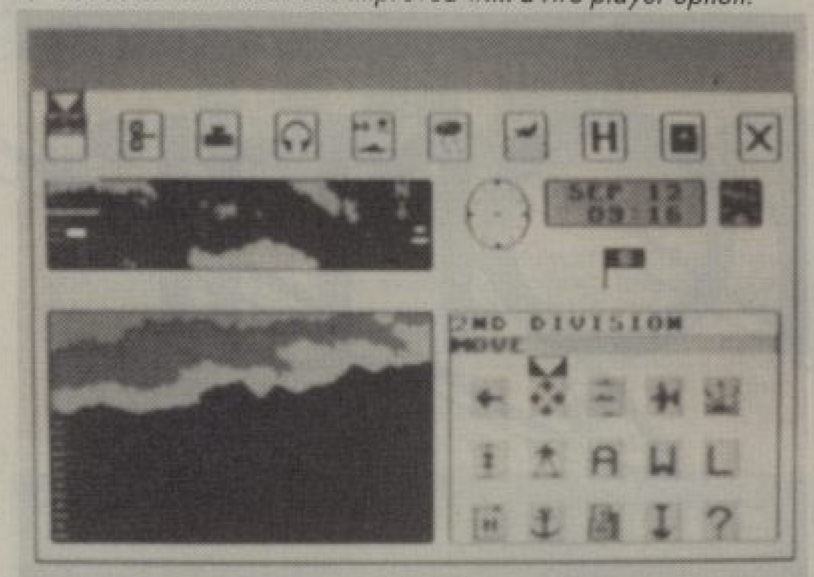
Guadalcanal provides exactly this challenge in a one-player game, with the player taking either side against the computer, moving between a main map to direct ships and aircraft and a battle map of Guadalcanal.

The game is icon-driven and works in continuous time (roughly one second equals one game minute) which can be speeded up to cope with the months that the campaign lasted.

At the start the Americans are in no condition to attack. They must protect their sea convoy with battleships and aircraft carriers, building up troops and supplies on the island. If you leave behind the ammunition and the medicine your troops will be over-run or die of disease.

Meanwhile the Japanese, who had more battleships and carriers in the area, are trying to do the same thing, scouting to find the Americans. If either side loses it supply ships to enemy action it has lost the battle.

▼ *Guadalcanal would have improved with a two player option.*



▼ *The game is icon-driven.*



Trying to cover every aspect of a campaign – including even code breaking – like this is ambitious. One main drawback is that you can only give directional movement orders. While you are watching the land fighting your carriers may have run into an island.

The game can be paused, but the continuous times doesn't allow a lot of planning or thinking before you react.

Guadalcanal is a good and interesting wargame, that would have been even better with a two player option.

► GRAPHICS	7
► REALISM	7
► PLAYABILITY	7
► VALUE	8

POWER STRUGGLE

► MACHINE: CBM 64.
► SUPPLIER: PSS.
► PRICE: £4.99 (CASS) £9.99 (DISK)
► REVIEWER: STEVE BADSEY.

The real world of international politics and wars is so complex that it is almost impossible to represent on a computer. Very sensibly, the designers of *Power Struggle* have not tried. Instead, they have produced a very simple, very enjoyable game for one or two players in which you are invited to take over the world.

The game screen is a world map divided both into regions and smaller countries, each with its own military and industrial strength and political influence. The players control as a block either the "West" or the "East", trying to influence neutral countries to join their side. This influence can include neutral countries to join their side. This influence can include direct military action, or the transfer of military industrial power from a strong country to a weak one.

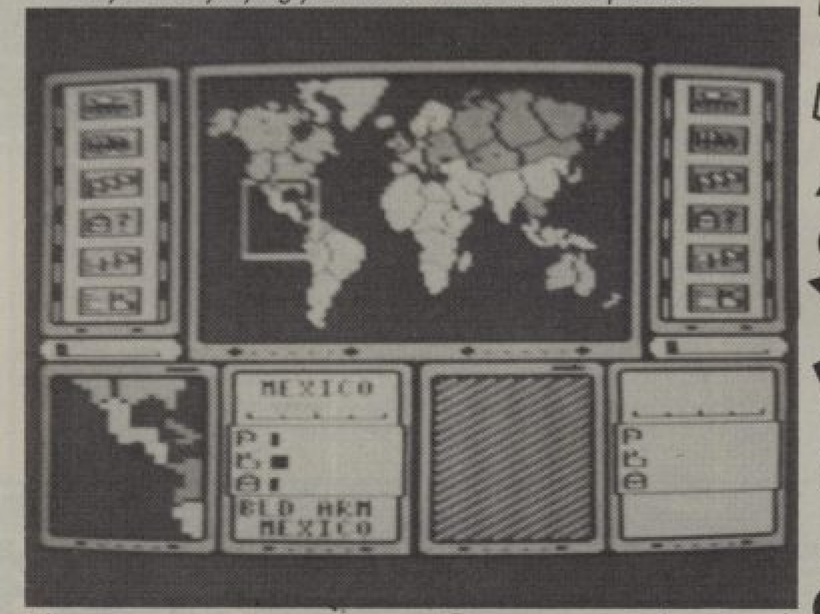
Some neutral countries start with a leaning towards one side or the other and are easy to win over. Once a country has been won over it cannot change to the other side except by being defeated in war and occupied. In the standard game the division of countries into West, East and neutral reflects the real world, but the players can also select a completely random opening. The game takes several hours to play through, and only ends when the map is completely green (West controls every country) or red (East has control).

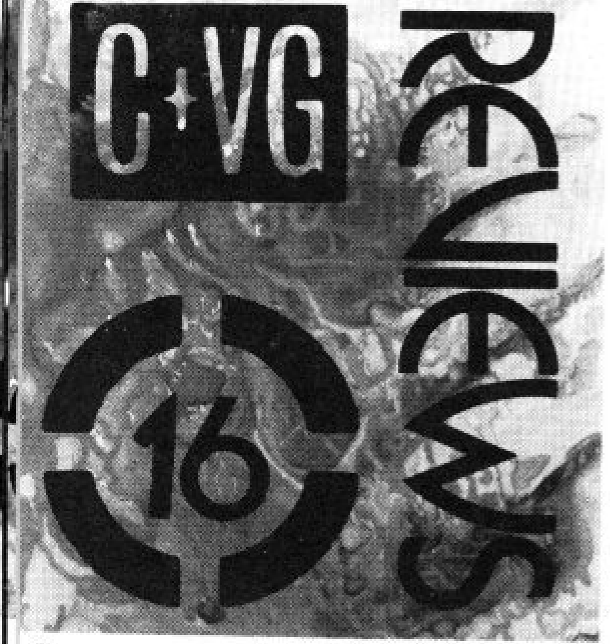
The problem is they have to do so together at the same time, which sometimes degenerates into an exercise in joystick manipulation as players try to double-bluff on their orders. There is no hidden movement from the computer, which as an opponent unashamedly plans its moves according to what the player is doing, resulting too often in stalemate.

This is not a realistic game, nor one to be taken too seriously. But it is very playable, and especially good value.

► GRAPHICS	7
► REALISM	4
► PLAYABILITY	8
► VALUE	8

▼ *Do you fancy trying your hand at International politics?*





► MACHINES: AMSTRAD CPC RANGE, ATARI ST
► SUPPLIER: INFOGRAMES
► VERSION TESTED: AMSTRAD DISK
► PRICE: £9.95 (Cass), £14.95 (Disk)
► REVIEWER: DAVID BISHOP

CRAFTON II

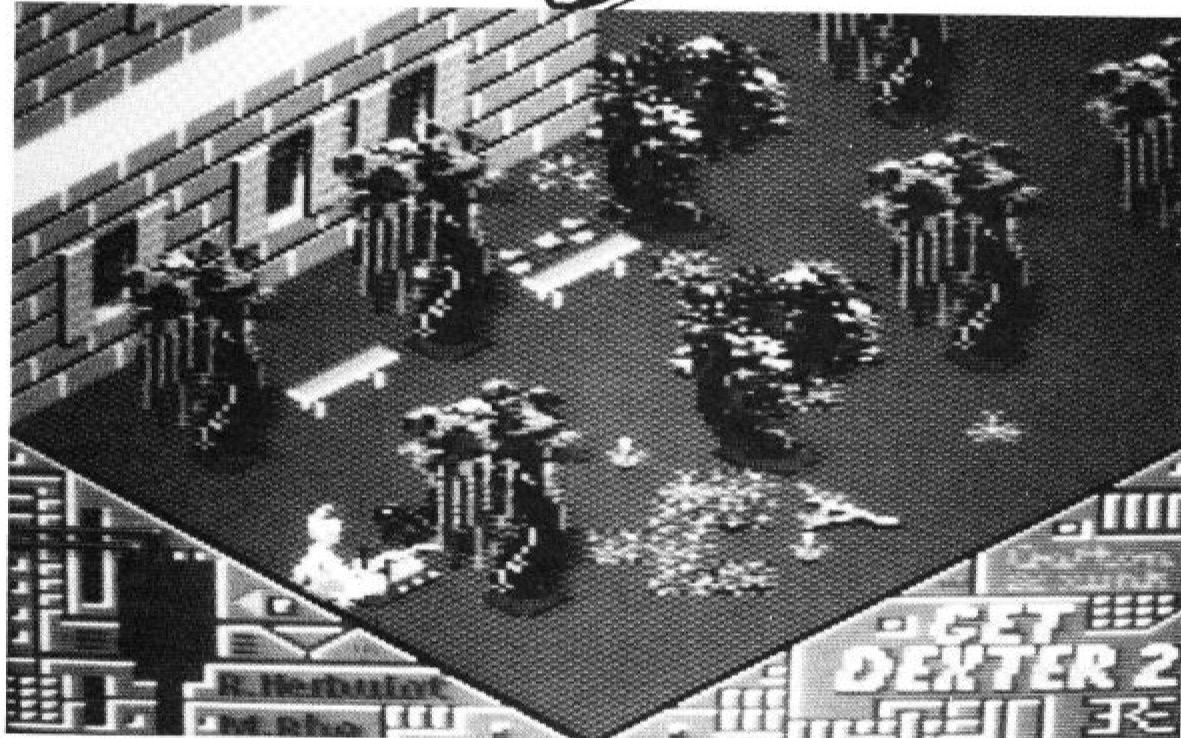
Crafton and Xunk was one of the first isometric games released for the Amstrad, back in the murky past of 1985. It was notable for its colourful rooms, crammed full of objects that could be pushed around, walked, and even bounced on – in the case of beds.

At the time, such graphical treats were fresh and new. Now however, budget priced isometrics with movable objects and the like are two-a-penny, so what's *Crafton II* got that justifies its £10 (£15 for disk) price tag, and is it worth the dosh?

The game is set on Kef, a planet inhabited by two races; the Stiffiens are an able and methodical race while the Swapis are a disorderly rabble whose favourite pastime is bartering with each other.

Recently a new religious sect, made up entirely of Stiffiens, has taken to holding secret meetings in a mysterious complex of catacombs and grottos, far beneath one of the planet's highest mountains. No 'outsider' has ever found the entrance to the catacombes, let alone succeeded in unravelling the secrets that lie beyond.

You have been summoned to the planet by the Swapis who want to know what makes this strange religious sect tick. But, in order to gain their confidence, the Swapis will ask you to perform various tasks. Once they think you're a regular guy, they'll show you the entrance to the when what you really want to be doing is sinking your teeth into a few meaty problems and puzzles.



▲ *Crafton II has more atmosphere than most arcade adventures.*

Not that *Crafton II* doesn't have more than its fair share of problems, because it has more than most, giving it far more of an adventure flavour than many other so-called arcade adventures.

So, if you like your isometrics crammed full of opened tins, mouse traps, gift-wrapped parcels, and fleas nests, and all manner of weird and wonderful creatures (all beautifully designed and animated) then *Crafton* could be for you. personally I'll stick to *Head Over Heals*.

catacombes. Only then can the second part of the game begin.

The map in *Crafton II* is big, taking in houses, cottages, and even a temple frequented by hoards on monks. All these locations are linked together by numerous outdoor scenes with everything from hedges and walls to trees that drop oranges on your head if you bump into them.

The attention to detail, both inside and out, is impressive; almost anything you care to move can be pushed or pulled. Objects can be used, traded, and even thrown, in addition to the standard pick up and drop.

In fact, is anything, the game is too cluttered with objects, making it a daunting task working out what is useful and what is pure decoration. Because of this, you find yourself spending too much time experimenting with objects,


▲ *The graphic detail in the game is impressive.*

► GRAPHICS	9
► SOUND	7
► VALUE	7
► PLAYABILITY	7

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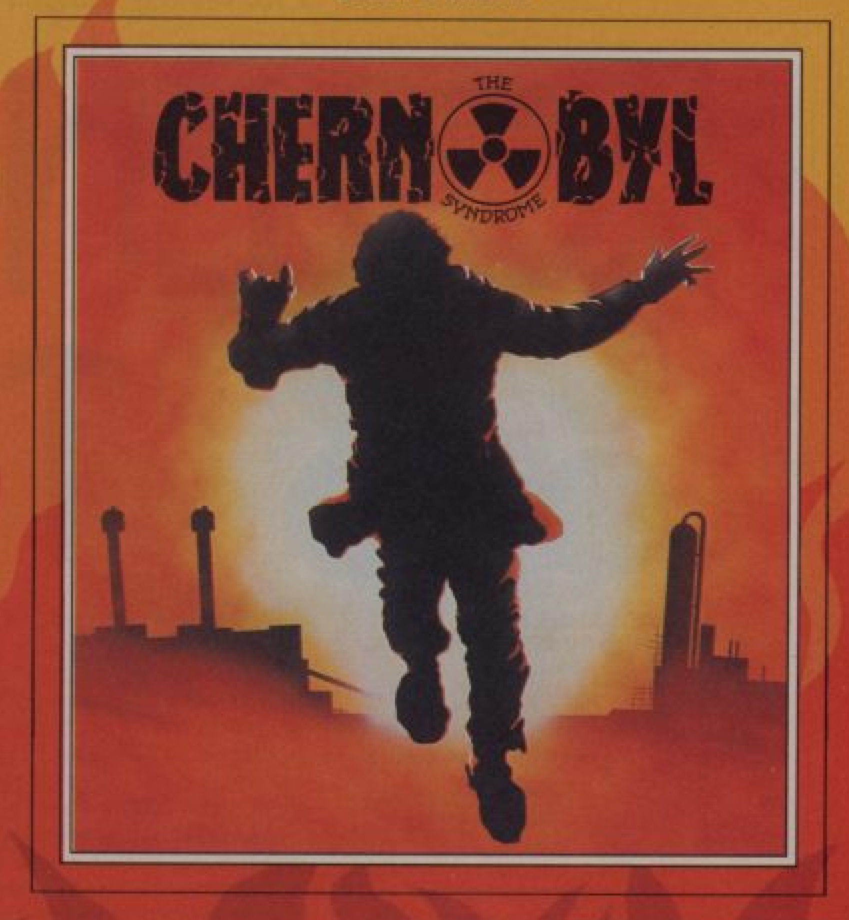
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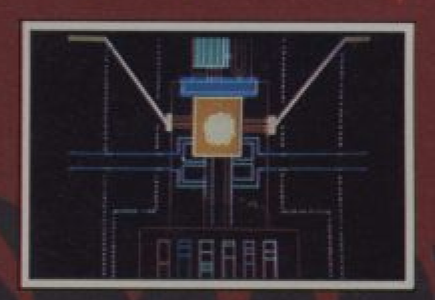
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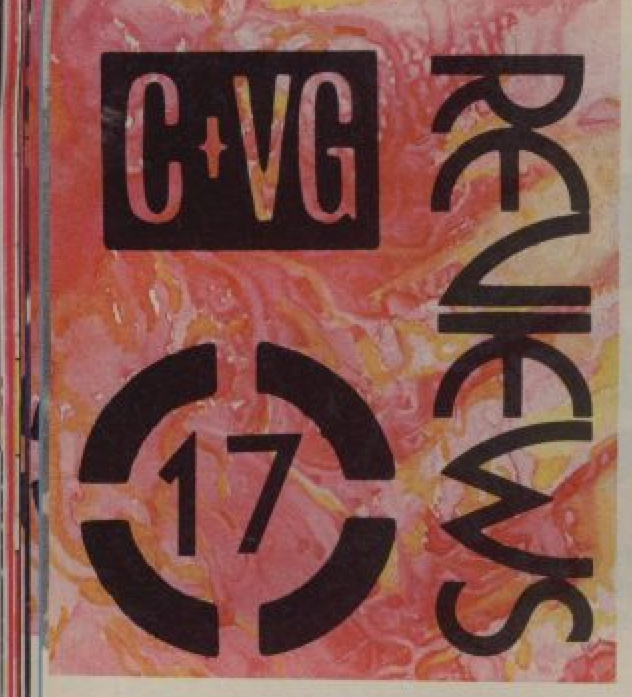




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▲ *Are you tough enough to be a Rolling Thunder agent?*

ROLLING THUNDER

► MACHINES: CBM 64/128/SPECTRUM/AMSTRAD/ATARI ST/AMIGA
► SUPPLIER: US GOLD
► PRICE: CBM (£9.99/£11.99), SPECTRUM (£8.99), AMSTRAD (£9.99/£14.99), ST (£19.99), AMIGA (£24.99)
► VERSION TESTED: AMSTRAD
► REVIEWER: MATT BIELBY

Deep, deep beneath a deserted warehouse an evil criminal mastermind holds a group of unfortunates hostage. His plan? To take over the world, of course, in the time honoured evil, criminal mastermind tradition.

You play a James Bond-type from the *Rolling Thunder* Undercover Cop Agency, going up against the wicked Geldra on his home turf, freeing the hostages and wasting the big cheese himself. Sounds easy? Well, I can assure you it's not!

As you move around the warehouse, searching for the secret door that leads deeper into the fortress, hooded bad guys leap out at you, blasting with pistols and throwing bombs from the overhead catwalk. They might just be cannon fodder, but they pack a punch, and there are enough of them around at even the early levels to make staying in one piece a real problem.

You can escape immediate danger by ducking into doorways, some of which contain new ammo for you to reload, or by jumping up onto the catwalk – press fire and up together –, but new hazards can lurk there as well.

As always, the further you get into the game, the hotter things get, with ceiling-mounted laser cannons opening up and various obstacles appearing underfoot, including stalagmites and lava pits. Things become pretty hairy pretty rapidly, especially as I found some of the techniques for jumping or ducking out of trouble hard to perfect on some joysticks.

It's certainly worth making the effort to get confident with this stuff early on, if you are to have a fighting chance on the upper levels.

All in all, *Rolling Thunder* is not a bad shoot-'em-up, but they do come better. It is certainly a tough game to come anywhere near finishing, in fact I sometimes got the impression it was perhaps too heavily weighted against the player (you have to go around the whole thing twice before you get a shot at Geldra) considering that the graphics aren't sufficiently inspiring to keep the interest for very long.

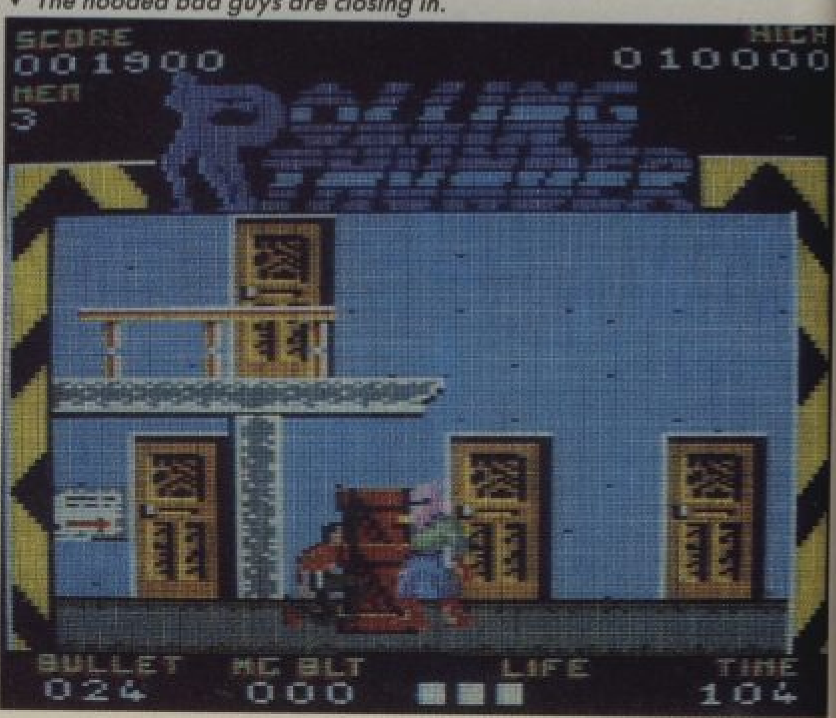
If you are in the market for this kind of scrolling, multiple platform shoot-'em up, it might be worth checking out the competition, such as Ocean's *Grysor*, before splashing out.

► GRAPHICS	6
► SOUND	5
► VALUE	6
► PLAYABILITY	7

▼ *What lurks behind the doors?*



▼ *The hooded bad guys are closing in.*



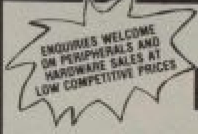
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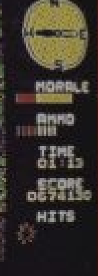
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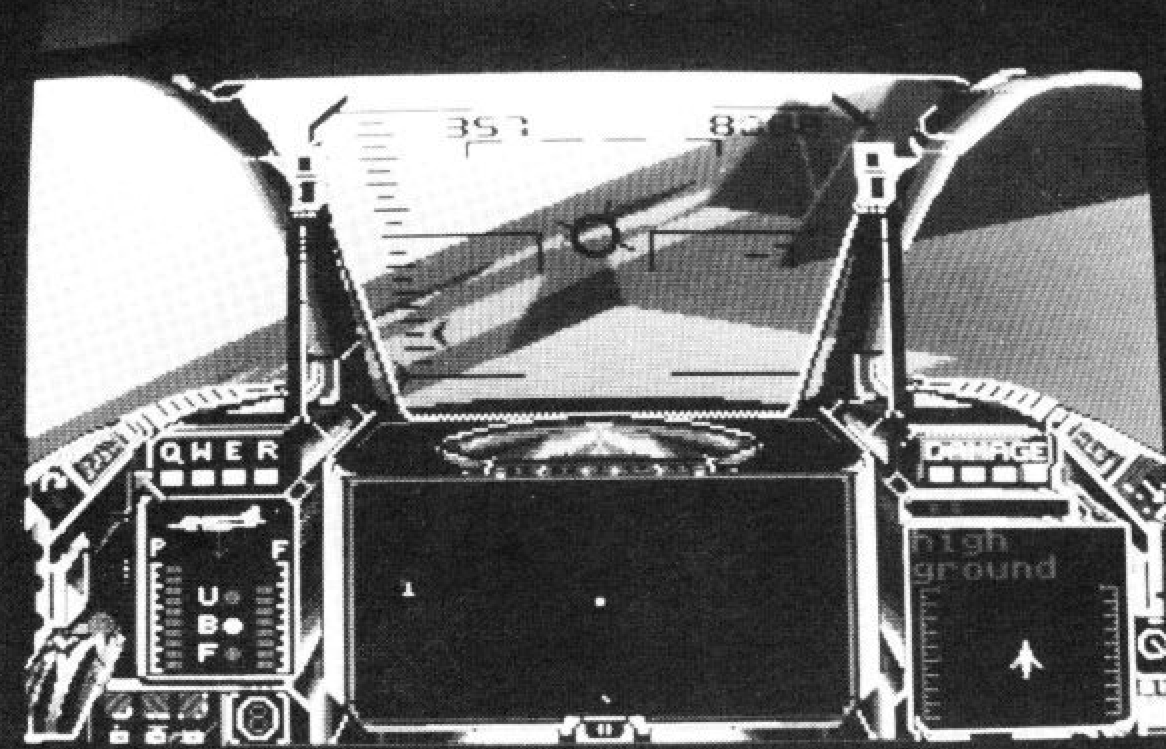
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► MACHINES: AMIGA, CBM 64, ST, SPECTRUM.
► SUPPLIER: MIRRORSOFT.
► PRICE: £24.95.
► REVIEWER: EUGENE LACEY.



▲ *The ultimate flight simulation.*

STRIKE FORCE HARRIER

When Concorde pilot Captain John Hutchinson reviewed *Strike Force Harrier,* on the Commodore 64 he had a word with a chum in the RAF and "took one up" to test the simulation for authenticity.

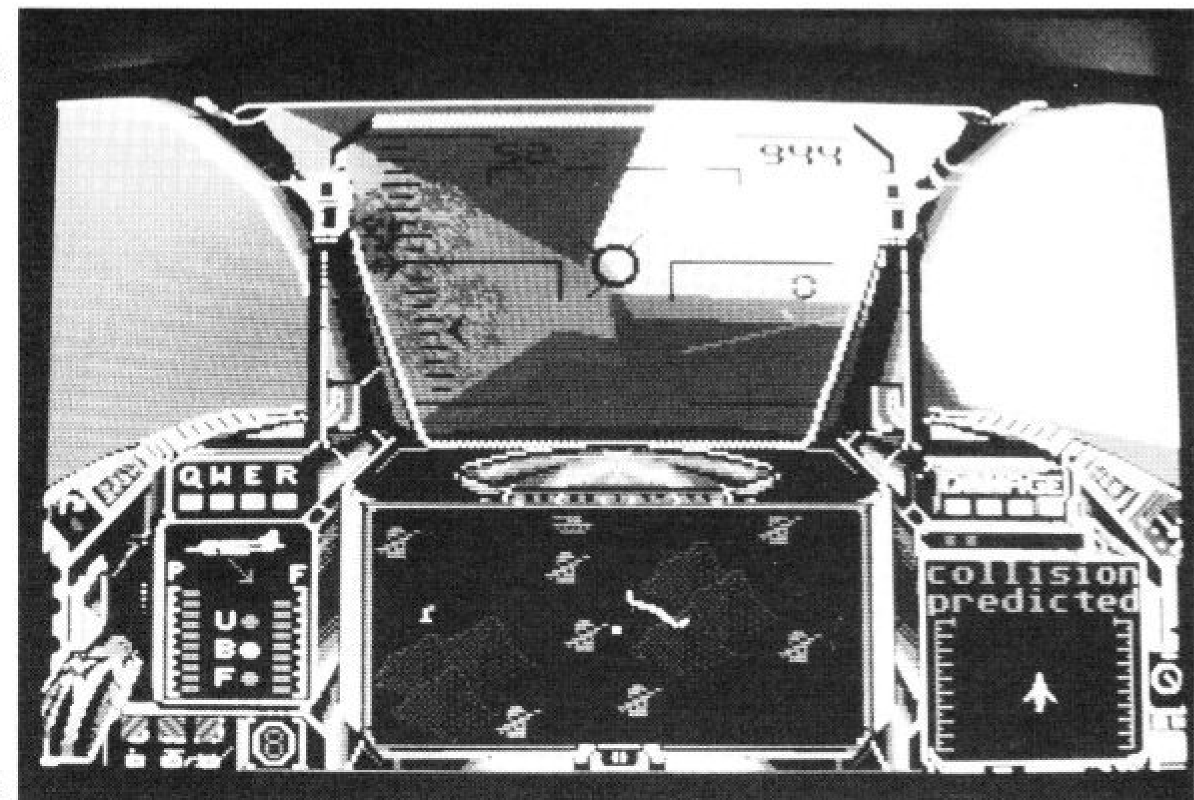
One wonders what this bells and whistles and Amiga version would tempt him to do – perhaps a head to head with a Mig – who knows? One thing is clear though this is about as near as mere mortals like you and I are going to get to going head against a Mig in the fabulous jump jet.

The number of controls and information panels on offer are staggering – offering a truly sophicticated and absorbing simulation – though not a "pure" one as there are a few ficticious extra facilities thrown in for good measure.

Once you have mastered the basics of flight you can accept a mission. The objective here is to destroy the enemy HQ – 125 miles NNE of your position as shown on your ground map.

Before letting the enemy HQ taste your missiles you have to eliminate the ground tanks that are threatening your ground installations.

Once you are in the skies you can rely on the planes highly computerised controls to get you through your mission. Your trustiest aly is your FOFTRAC – a ficticious instrument that real life Harrier pilots would love to have on board. It stands for Friend or Foe Tracking Radar. It appears just below the cockpit and shows you a combined map and updating target display of your area of operation.



▲ *Staggering amount of controls.*

To supplement FOFTRAC you also have the AAR – which stands for Air Attack Radar and shows you in detail what is also occupying your airspace.

Excellent Amiga sound effects help you here like when the plane stalls – there is a change of noise and the nose drops.

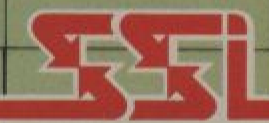
The 'Vector thrust' which is what enables the jet to perform its characteristic vertical lift off is produced by turning the engine nozzles through 90° forcing it into the air. The simulation simplifies things slightly – in as much as you have only three angles – horizontal, 45° and vertical.

I know of at least four new flight sim – type games currently under development for the Amiga. Mirrorsoft's *Strike Force Harrier* will be the one that wins the race to the software shelves – it may well prove to be the most entertaining as well with its neat mix of pure sim and arcade game play.

► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	7
► VALUE	6
► PLAYABILITY	6

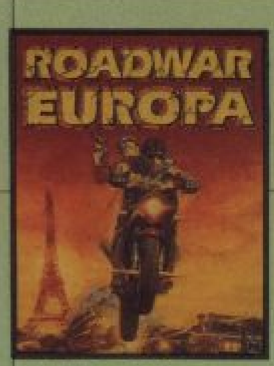
SSI STANDS OUT FROM THE CROWD

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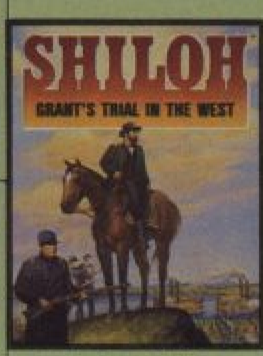
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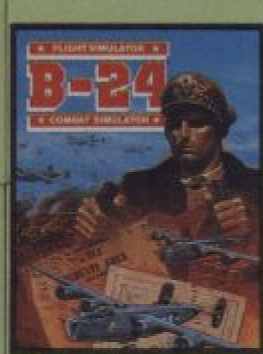
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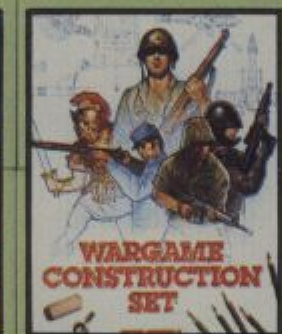
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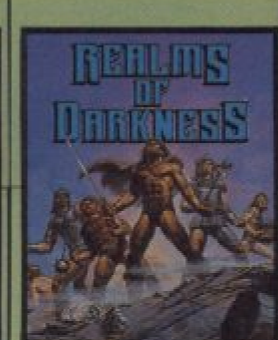
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SLAM

SENTS



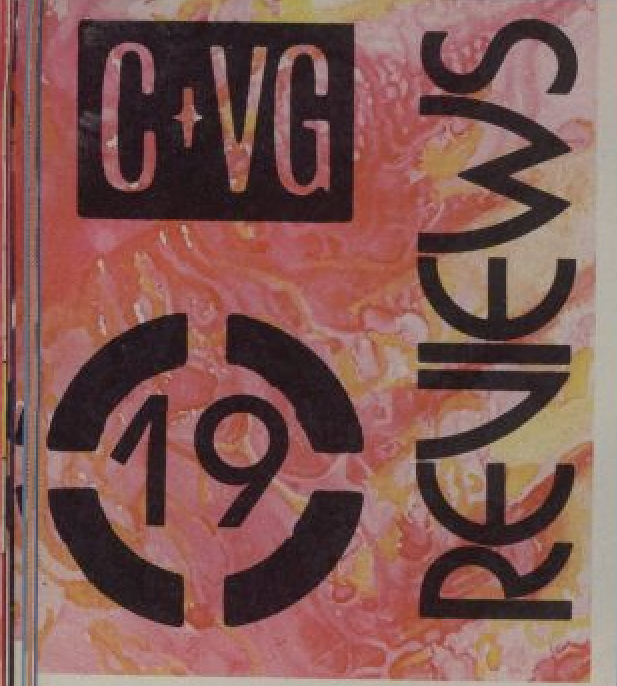
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GRANDSLAM





▲ *Blast those bricks!*

► MACHINE: AMIGA.
► SUPPLIER: DISCOVERY. SOFTWARE INTERNATIONAL.
► PRICE: IMPORT ONLY.
► REVIEWER: MATT BIELBY.

ARKANOID

This game of the month this and every month as far as I'm concerned – or at least until the next hot Amiga game comes – is this new version of *Arkanoid*. It makes such good use of the increased ability of the Amiga as to make it the nearest thing yet to playing a coin op in your own bedroom. Unless you win a C+VG competition that is!

Apparantly, you are supposed to be the captain of the escape craft Vaus, trapped somewhere in space behind a variety of elaborate brick walls, and desperately fighting your way out.

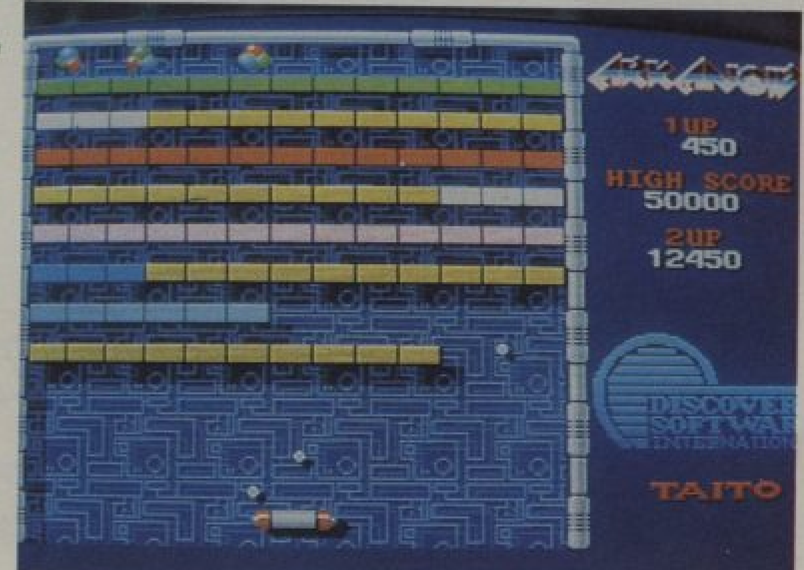
Your rectangular ship moves back and forth across the bottom of the screen, battling a single energy bolt up against the brickwork as if you were playing some giant game of destructive squash. Miss the bolt and you lose a life.

In fact this whole space ship idea is a bit of red herring as far as playing the game is concerned. The ship looks and feels so much like a bat, the energy bolt like a ball and the bright geometric shapes of the walls and backgrounds so little like any idea of space I've ever heard of that you tend to treat it as a super-duper, up-to-the-minute version of one of those tennis games we all played back in prehistoric times.

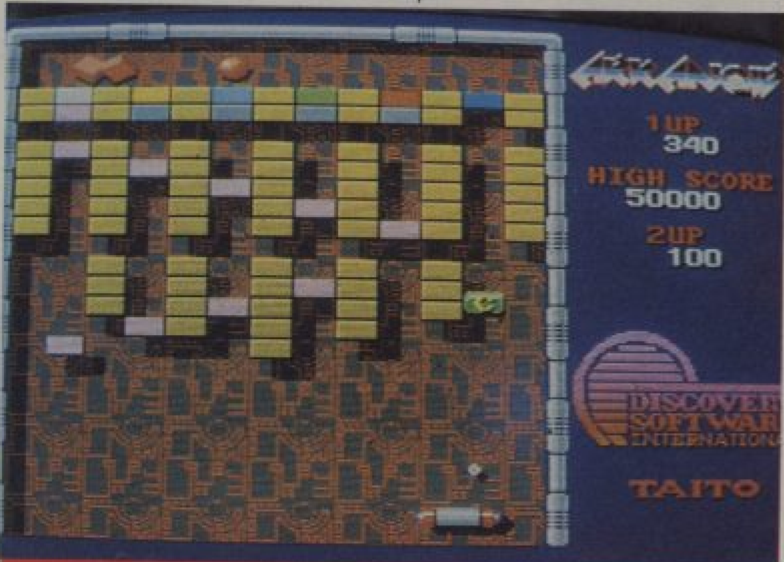
No, don't groan, those games may have been basic, but they were undeniably addictive, and what *Arkanoid* does is retain that very simple addicition, while at the same time adding all the advances we've gone through over the years.

Points are awarded for knocking out each brick, or for taking out one of the variety of bizarre aliens that whizz about causing no threat to anyone, outside of drastically affecting the ball's course. At the same time, coloured energy barrels drop towards you. Collect these, and your ship is dramatically effected. Blue ones marked F, for instance, stretch your craft to twice it's size, making batting the energy blips much easier.

▼ *Juggling is all part of the game.*



▼ *A great conversion of a classic coin-up.*



Green barrels (G) make the ship sticky, catching the ball each time and allowing you to reposition your ship before releasing it again to good effect. Light blue splits the ball into three, giving you far more destructive power, for as long as you can juggle them.

There are others that speed up or slow down the speed of the ball, but best of all is the red L barrel, which turns your ship into a laser cannon. You get unlimited shots on this, so catch one and the level could be as good as won, as long as you don't get carried away blasting, and lose touch with ball.

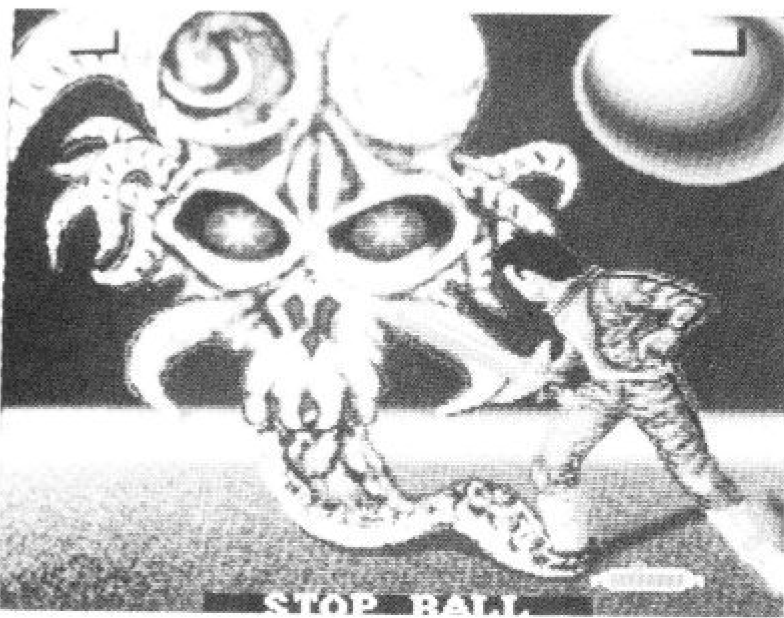
Arkanoid is an odd game in that at times it seems incredibly easy – your Granny could play it – when suddenly an unexpected hit speeds everything up, or an unexpected obstacle sends the blip careering in an odd direction. You certainly need to be on your toes. If you're lucky enough to have an Amiga, this should be near the top of your list.

► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	7
► VALUE	8
► PLAYABILITY	8



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▲ *Great backdrops.*

- ► MACHINE: AMIGA.
- ► SUPPLIER: ROBTEK/DIAMOND.
- ► PRICE: £19.95.
- ► REVIEWER: CHRIS CAIN.

BALL RAIDER

Over the past few months the *'Breakout'* theme has been used to create some really good versions of the old arcade classic. First there was *Arkanoid,* then *Impact* and finally *Tonic Tiles.*

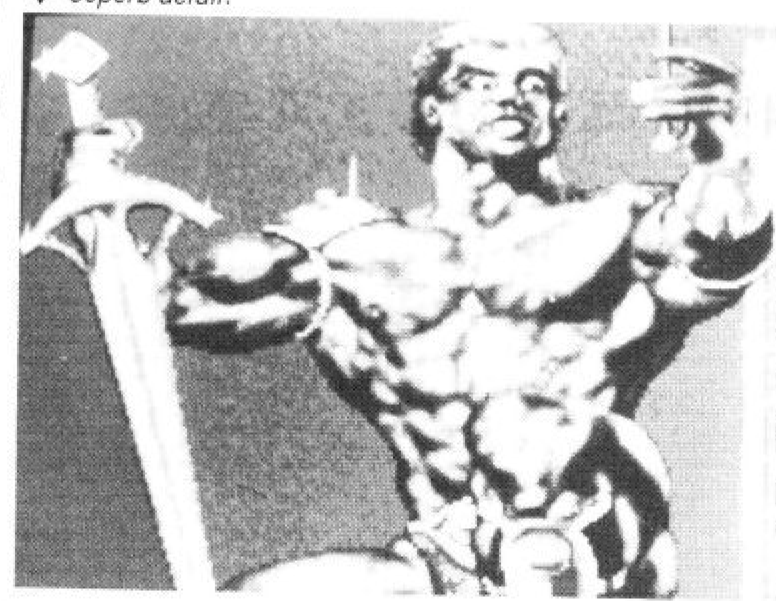
So it will probably come as no surprise to find that *Ball Raider,* the latest from German-based software house Diamond, runs in a similar vein.

Having said that, it is surprising to find that this is also a pretty nifty version.

The scenario for *Ball Raider* is about as original as the signed photograph of Napoleon hanging above the Ed's desk, going on about the ultimate challenge, etc, etc.

Even the special effects such as fast ball, stop ball and free ship are all available in *Arkanoid.*

▼ *Superb detail.*



However, where originality does show its face is the stunning 32 colour backdrops for each screen.

These backdrops are pictures of great detail, featuring things like fantasy sword-fights, astronauts and heavenly beings. The artwork isn't digitised, and it makes one hell off a difference.

One thing about *Ball Raider,* though, is the devious patterns in which the bricks are laid out. Take level two for example. The bottom row of blocks, except one, are absolutely indestructible. This means bouncing the ball through a one block gap, and it's so darn tricky that you could easily grow old trying to do it.

Of course, no good *Breakout* clone would be complete without a nice sound effect or two. *Ball Raider* has this sussed in the form of a digitised rhythm which pumps away in the background while you play. Although it keeps repeating itself, the tune doesn't seem to get on your nerves and this is a real boon.

The only other unique touch is that you can't actually choose what extras you get to play with, you just get them thrown upon you. One minute you've got a stop ball, allowing you to hold the ball and manoeuvre it, the next ball is wizzing around the screen in a fast mode.

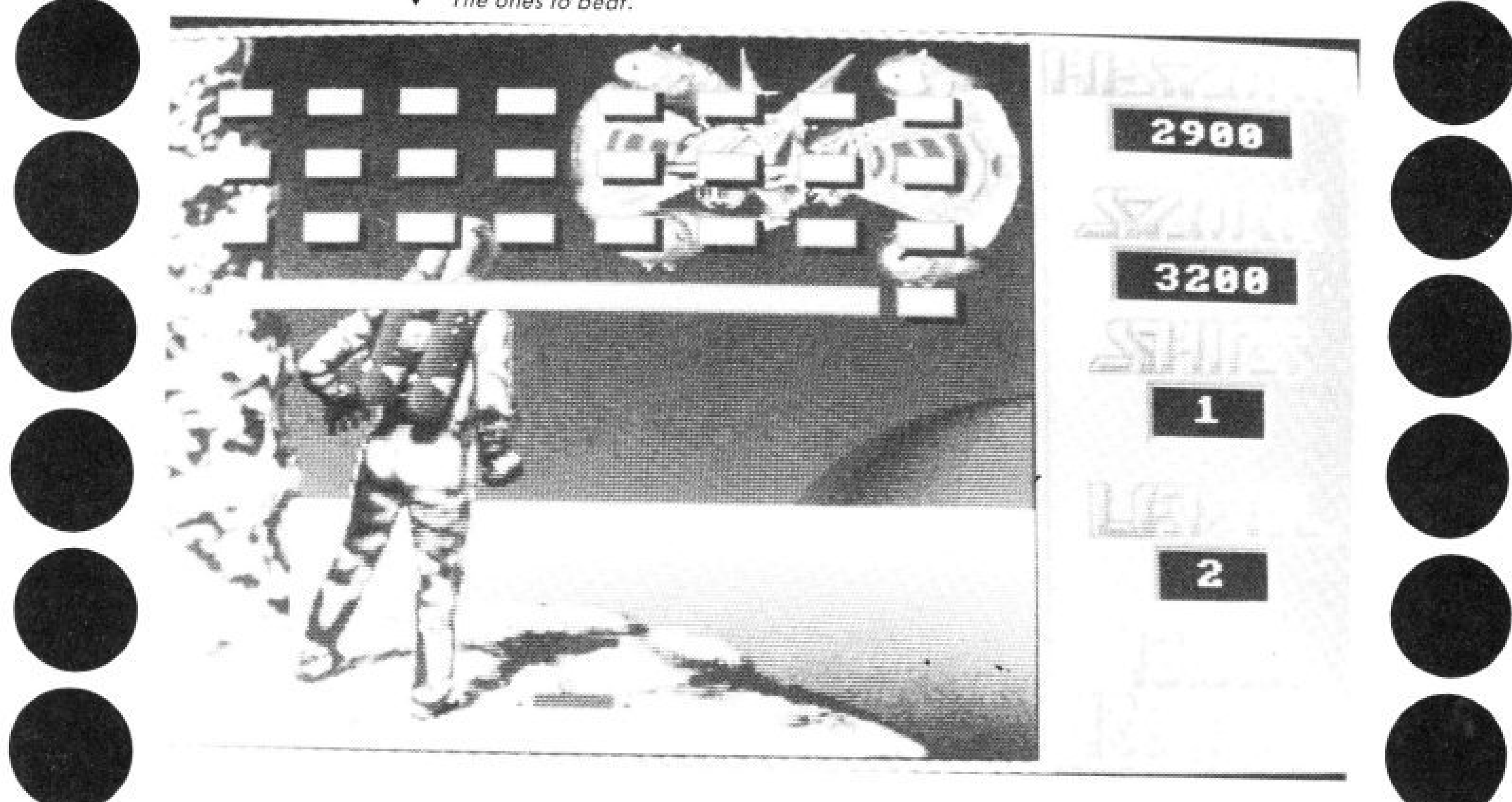
Needless to say this makes things slightly trickier but it all adds to the fun.

Well, that's about it. A neat version of breakout, with some great graphical backdrops and nice sound. It even has a animated high score table, featuring a real 'Arnold' type who pulls down a blind to reveal the high scores.

Can't really say much more, it's just *Breakout.*

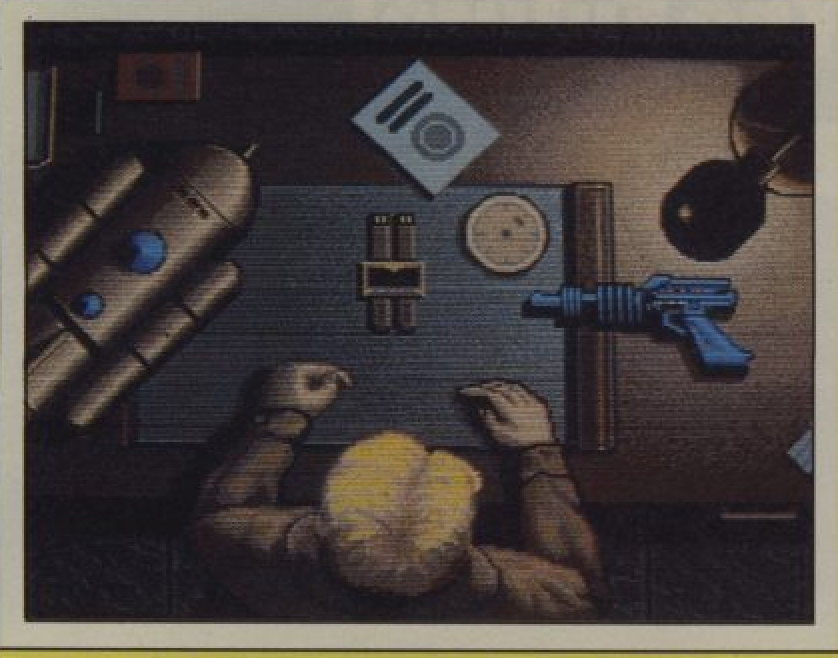
► GRAPHICS	9
► SOUND	7
► PLAYABILITY	6
► VALUE	7

▼ *The ones to beat.*




Preview The Future!
PROJECT: STEALTH FIGHTER
301

PREVIEW



▲ It's 1940 and Cody contemplates the task that confronts him . . .



▲ Up, up and away with his jetpack on his back.

ROCKET R

Rocket Ranger is a celebration of the Saturday morning B movie. The American institution that fuelled the imaginations of generations with their ungainly metal men, dustbin space ships and cliffhanger plots that forced you to come back for the next installment the following week. Eugene Lacey talked to Cinemaware boss Bob Jacob about the game and the firm's plans for 1988 and beyond.

Commander Cody is the swashbuckling hero of Cinemaware's latest production. It's an epic arcade-cum-adventure game with stacks of high quality graphics of a similar quality to those that made the company's name when *Defender of the Crown* was launched last year.

It is 1940 and Cody is sitting alone in his New Jersey home when a horrifying vision of the future comes to him. It is a world where the outcome of World War II is very different to that which we know. It is a world in which the Nazis won. Swastikas fly from the White House and the whole of the world is under the tyranny of the Nazi jackboot.

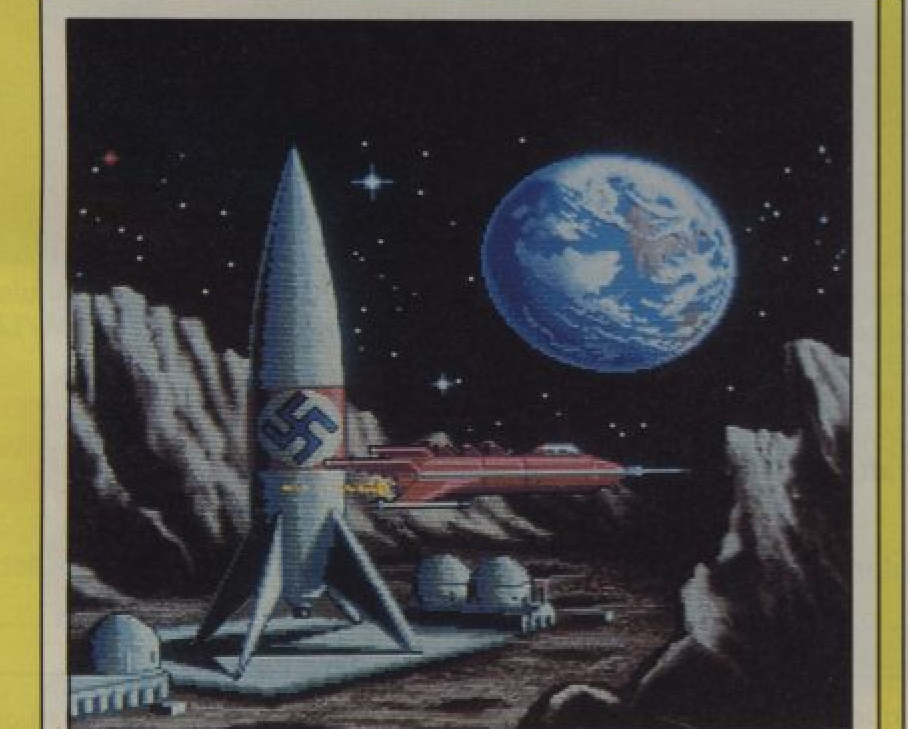
Commander Cody must fly back into history and change the course of the war. One of your first tasks is to rendezvous with the Zeppelin.

Cody was chosen for the mission because he was friendly with a scientist's daughter who has been kidnapped and is being interrogated by the Nazis.

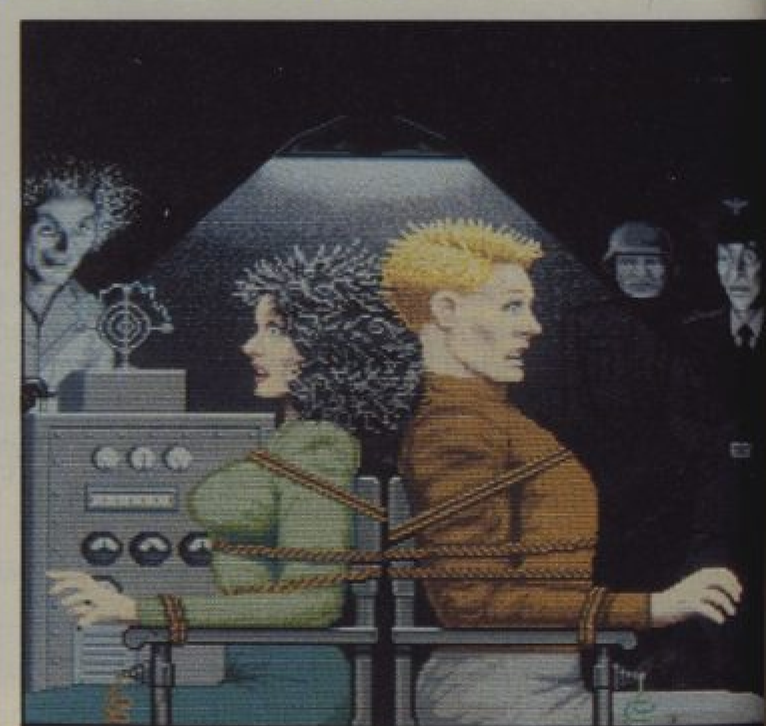
To succesfully complete the game you will have to fly to the moon. The source of the Nazi's military might is a special metal called 'lunarium'. This is mined by a group of female slaves. Men cannot handle lunarium as it weakens them and they die. Female zombies on the moon? Well I did say it was a celebration of the B movie.

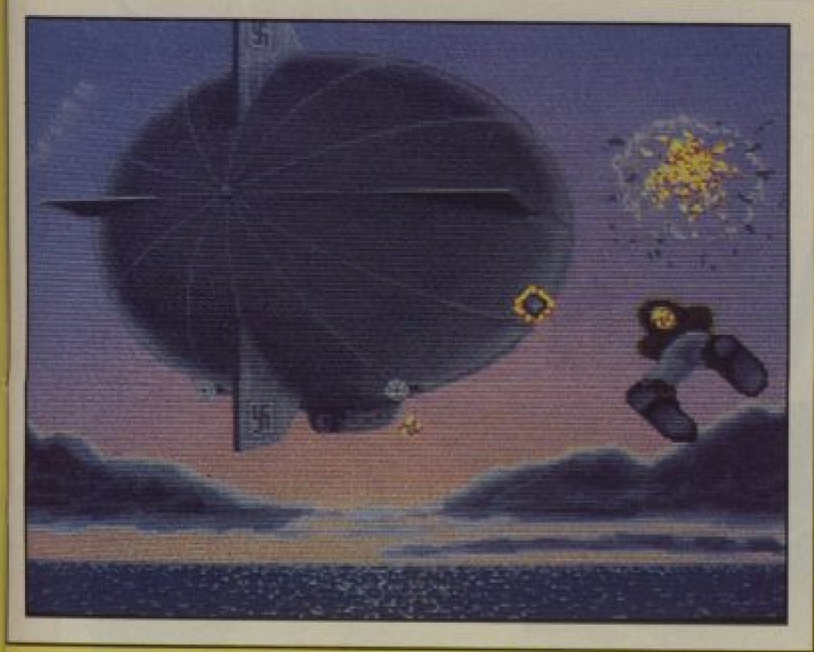
In order to complete this part of the game you will need to locate six

▼ A Nazi rocket guards the lunarium plant.

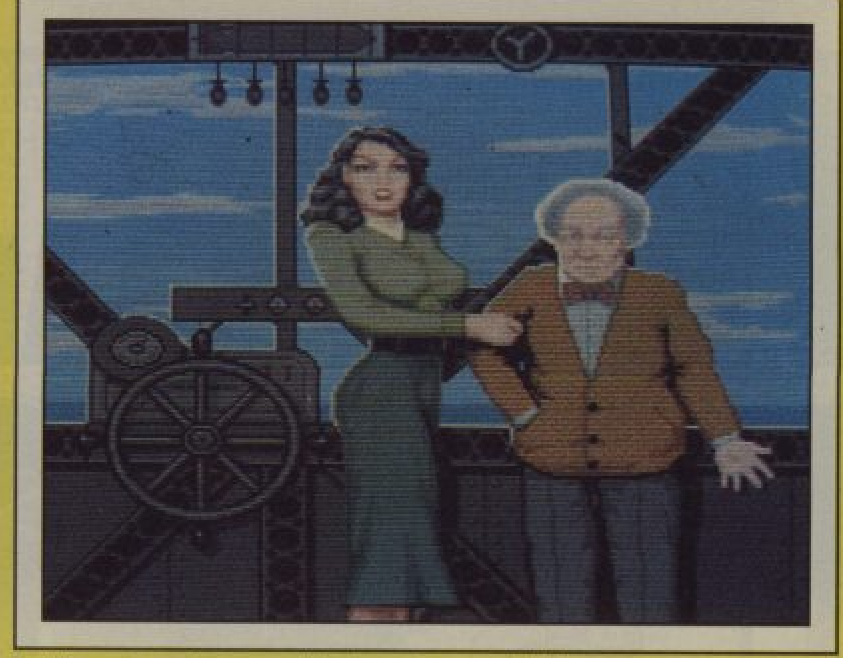


▼ Vee haff vays of making you talk.





After a fierce dogfight — rendezvous with the Zeppelin . . .



Where the scientist and his daughter are held hostage

pieces of a rocket ship and assemble it. Your agents search the world for the various pieces of the ship – their movements are charted on the world map – which is one of the main game play screens.

The Nazi lunar slaves have no desire to be freed – being in league with the Nazis. You may have to fight it out with them on the moon in wave after wave of attacking waves of Messchershmidt.

Another arcade sequence is a beat 'em up scrap with a German guard. Cinemaware are particularly pleased with the animation in this fight. Bob Jacob boasts: "There are over 60 frames of animation in the eight possible moves that can be used in the fight with the guard."

Ranger in terms of depth. We have been able to incorporate more game play because of a break-through that is unique to Cinemaware in loading data into the Amiga. We can simply load four times the amount of data – much faster than ever before.

Much of this extra capacity is used in sound effects and the extensive digitised speech incorporated in the "Give them a demonstration" to one of his assistants as they discuss the tortures that may be inflicted on our heroes.

To help him in his quest, Commander Cody has been issued with a number of futuristic gadgets to help in his battle with the Nazis. A wrist monitor enables him to communicate with his agents, send

ANGER

view of this.

There are a number of arcade sequences in the game – as well as the overiding strategy challenge of changing history.

One of these arcade sequences is an excellent *Space Harrier* like shoot 'em up challenge. Armed with a trusty lazer and his power pack on his back, Commander Cody must soar through

Jacob feels the graphics and animation in *Rocket Ranger* bests any of their previous games.

"It's miles ahead of anything we've done before," he said.

He is also defensive about the game itself, disagreeing with criticisms of earlier games for lack of game play.

"There is much more to *Rocket* interrogation sequence.

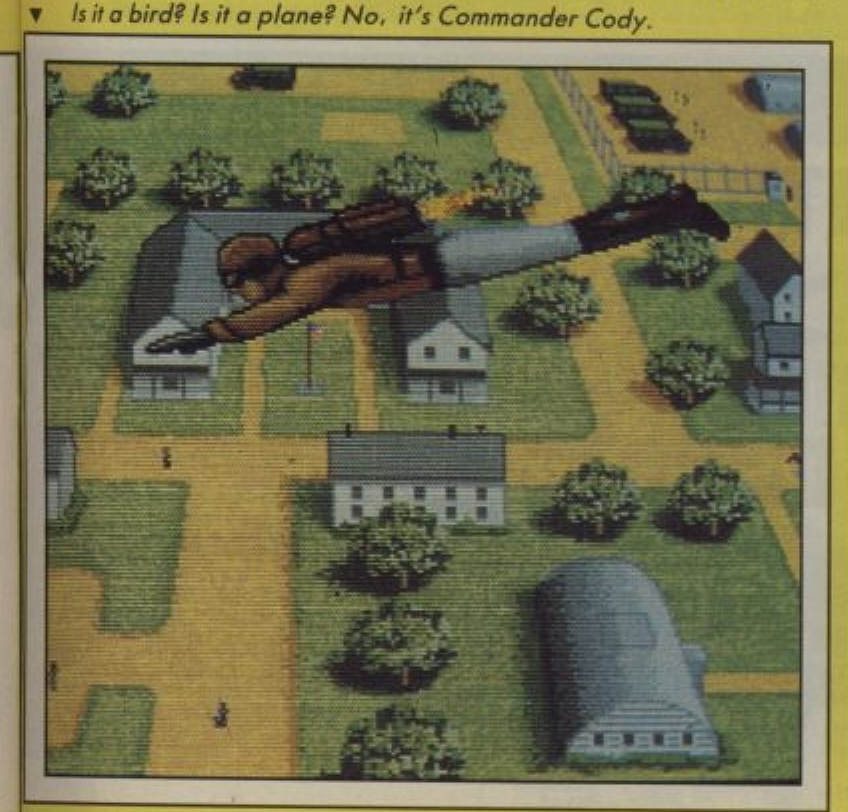
Cinemaware call their speech system "Real Talk" and it is not difficult to see why. Several phrases are barked out in a tough German accent as the officer interrogates Cody and the scientist's daughter.

"You will pay for your insolence," he says, when Cody gives a flippant reply to one of his questions. Or

S.O.S messages and select destinations to be travelled to.

Cody's Ray Gun features interesting digitised sound effects when he connects with a target. "The sounds you hear when a German plane is hit are real engine noises – recorded at Los Angeles Airport which is just down the road from the office," Jacob explains.

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's Commander Cody.

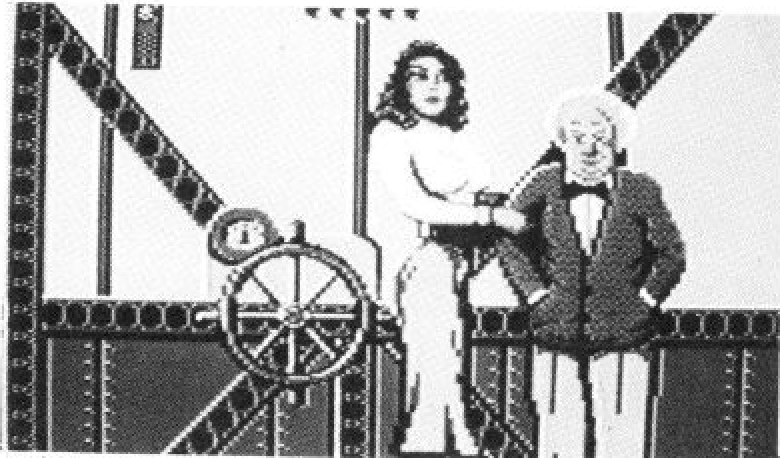


Cody's wrist monitor shows him what the Nazis are up to.



continued on page 62 ►

ROCKET RANGER



• 64 graphics — not at all embarassed by their Amiga counterparts.



• Penetration of Nazi forces.

Rocket Ranger is definitely one of the biggest computer games ever developed. "It will be shipped on two disks and has no less than four megabytes of data."

But if you think that sounds big this Amiga version is only a third of the size of a "C.D.I." version already on the drawing board in Cinemaware's sunny California studio. This version will run on a new wave of interactive entertainment systems being developed by a consortium of Japanese manufacturers and Philips – early pioneers of interactive disk entertainment.

It is not yet known exactly how these disks will work – but it is believed that they will hook up with 16-bit machines.

One thing is clear with people like Cinemaware and Electronic Arts now talking openly about launching software for these systems they must now be a lot nearer hitting the shops.

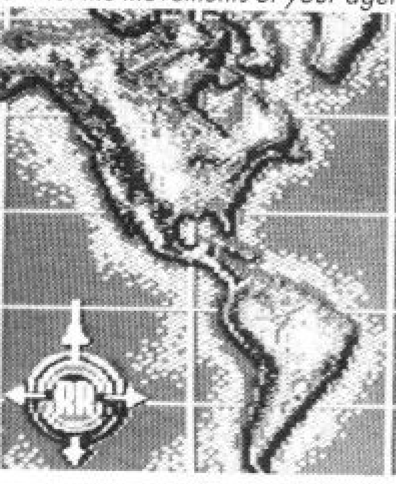
The arrival of CDI is of course tailor made for companies like Cinemaware – with their convincing graphics and detailed characterisation of characters and plot development. Even without the bells and whistles of the C.D.I. version of *Rocket Ranger* the game is bound to capture the imagination of games players around the world.

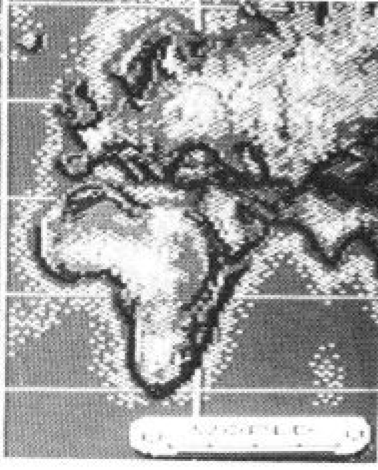
It is not only for Amiga owning elitists either. A 64 version is promised on two disks with "all the game play and graphics screens of the Amiga version," promises Bob Jacob. Atari ST and PC versions of the Amiga are also promised for later in the year.

• The Luftwaffe fly past as Hitler stirs the masses.



• Plot the movements of your agents on the world map.





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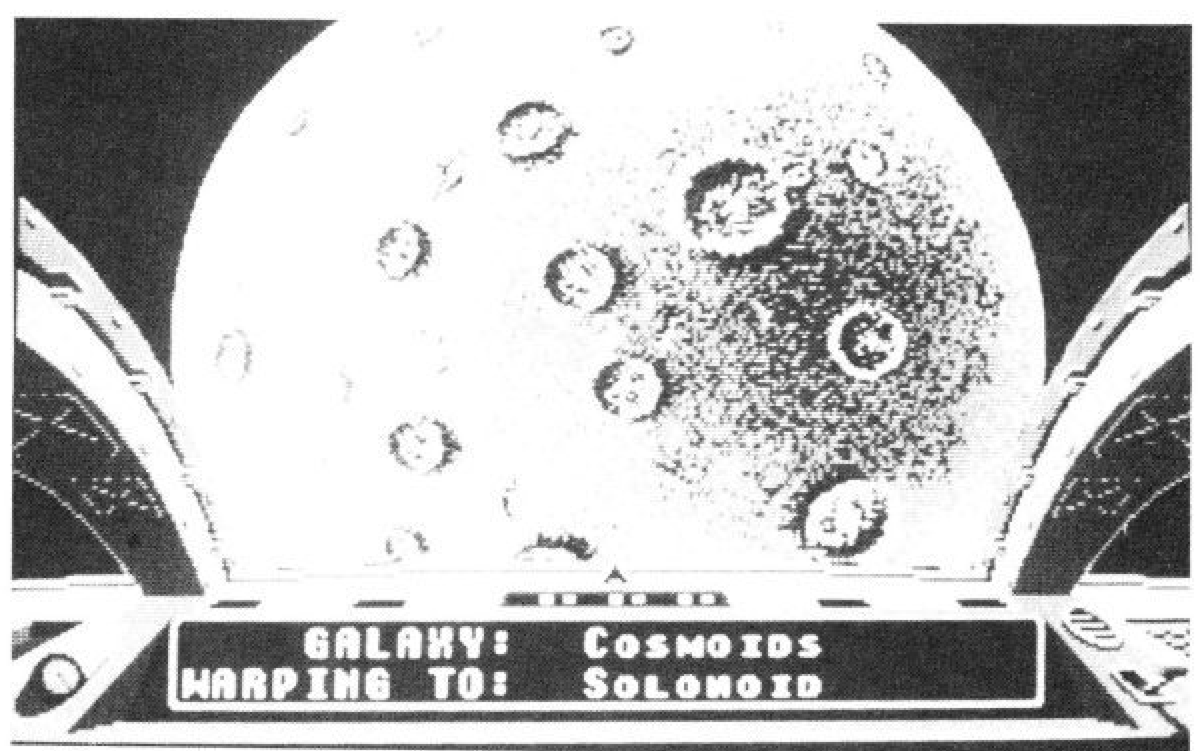
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OIDS

- ► MACHINE: ATARI ST.
- ► SUPPLIER: MIRRORSOFT.
- ► PRICE: £19.99.
- ► REVIEWER: EUGENE LACEY.



▲ *Warping to the rescue of Oids.*

Oids is a simple and hour-stealingly addictive new game for the Atari ST.

The basic idea is a very familiar one — a cross between *Thrust* and *Choplifter*. Simplicity itself. Your V-Wing ship is hatched gently from the mother ship. Pushing forward on your joystick thrusts the ship forward with a puff of retro-rocket flame from its rear.

The V-Wing can spin through 360 degrees shooting out full stop sized gun fire. It is quite tiny on the screen — similar in size to the *Asteroids* ship.

Blasting is crucial — particularly on the more difficult planets with their homing missiles and heavy ground to air bombardments.

The main game play is in controlling the ship and avoiding the flak. It is a real test of skill requiring the minutest adjustments to the ship's direction, speed and trajectory.

Each planet is a cavernous complex of jagged rocks, basins, and tiny flat plateaux where the *Oids* wait — shaking their arms furiously to attract your attention when you manage to get close to them.

The *Oids* don't actually help themselves much. In their anxiousness to scramble aboard the V-Wing they run up and down like headless chickens — sometimes in the way of your landing site. Landing is difficult enough without the desperate *Oids* due to the gravitational pull of the planet which makes the V-Wing drift as well as float downwards.

You can't really blame the *Oids* for being frantic — if they don't escape, their evil task-masters, the Biocretes, will melt them down, remake them and force them to slave for another lifetime. The Biocretes just don't give a monkeys you see. According to the storyline they say: "We built the *Oids*, so we have the right to treat then as we please".

Whether droids should have constitutional rights or not is something you might wish to ponder as you struggle to negotiate the complex caverns of the five progressively difficult planets. My guess is, however, that it will take all of your concentration to stay in the game.

It is the ground installations that make life really difficult. Some of the tower buildings issue an invisible force field that can send your V-Wing into a dangerous spin. Another conical tower materialises from nowhere and will, in seconds, send out an arc of flak curving up the edges of the screen as the ST almost shudders with the boom generated by this explosion.

Most deadly of all are the homing missile silos and one definite piece of strategy that you would do well to remember is to locate and destroy these at once. Their homing missiles are amongst the best I have seen in a computer game. They really pin you down and follow you, encircling you in ever decreasing circles until you make contact. Your only defence is to spin faster and eliminate them before they get to close. Believe me, when they start raining in in twos and threes, this ain't easy.

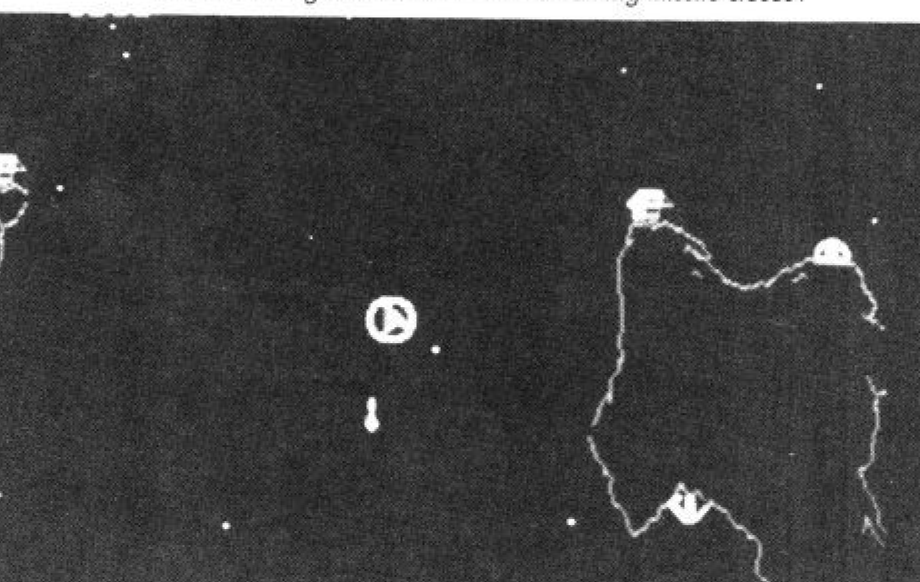
One of the best points about *Oids* is that it has a game designer and editor feature. When you have mastered the planets created for you by the game, you can design your own.

Any ST owner who has played *Thrust* will not want to be without *Oids*. My only criticism is the price. know that *Oids* is not out of line with other ST game price tags. It's just that having first played a £1.99 Firebird *Thrust* on a Commodore C16 and having loved it to death — more or less the same game seems a bit steep at twenty quid. Anyway, this game is too good to leave the review on a negative, I will say that if you do fork out for it you are in for hours of excellent computer entertainment.

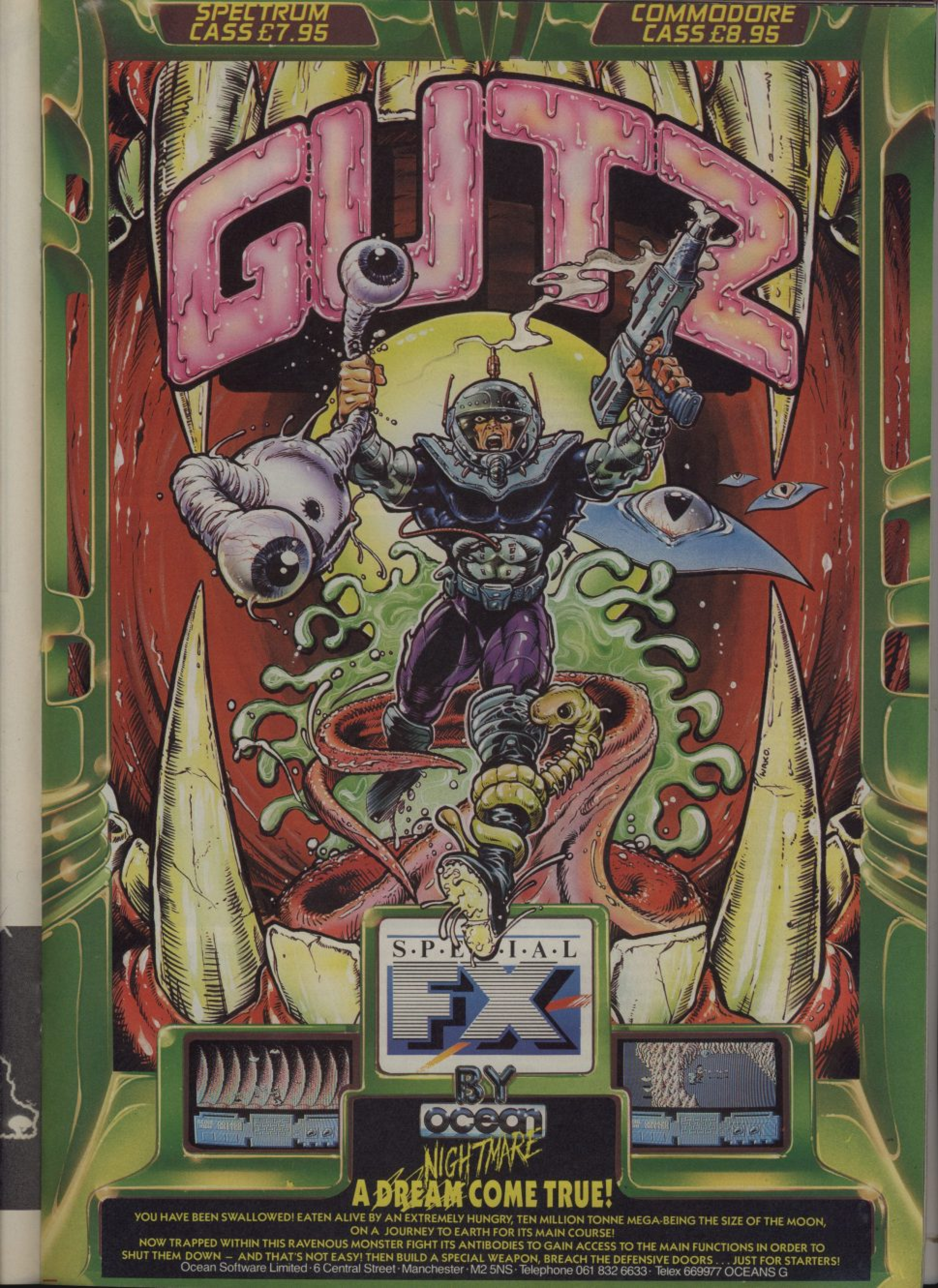
► GRAPHICS	6
► SOUND	6
► VALUE	5
► PLAYABILITY	8



▼ *The V-Wing uses its shield as the homing missile closes.*



▼ *Get out of that.*


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FERRARI F

► MACHINE: AMIGA.
► SUPPLIER: ELECTRONIC ARTS.
► PRICE: £24.95.
► REVIEWER: SEAMUS ST JOHN.

Fashions come and go in the games software business and generally come back again improved and changed.

The new sixteen bit machine have put games manufacturers in a quandry – new powerful computer are in abundance . . . new game ideas are, unfortunately, less numerous. We've seen the software houses parade in front of the 16 bit owners a whole back catalogue of computer games ranging from *Break-out* to *Pac-man*.

Electronic Arts has taken the racing game scenario to the Amiga and expanded the idea far beyond the boundries of the computer versions of *Pole Position* and *Outrun*, produced a computer game that is a sophisticated, painstakingly accurate and, in many ways, original simulation of racing a Formula One Ferrari in the Grand Prix World Championships. Where *Outrun* was frantic steering and pedal pumping, *Ferrari Formula One* is a game of strategy, planning and team and engine management.

And this is where the game's main fault lies – there's no sensation of speed or the excitement of travelling at over 200mph on some of the world's most dangerous and exhilerating race tracks.

Every other imaginable aspect of managing a Formula One team and racing the car are allowed for in the game. Many months of research and planning time have obviously been spent on producing the game, but when you actually try burning rubber, the *Formula One Ferrari* does become quite a disappointment considering how good the rest of the package is.

Electronic Arts may well claim that they have set out to create an authentic simulation and not another copy of *Outrun*. While we can be thankful that the game's not *Outrun* all over again, I do think that any racing simulation should tax the player's driving reflexes as well as his or her brain.

That one criticism apart, let's see what the game has to offer.

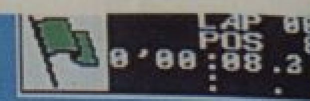
The game begins with a demo mode which gives you the chance to familiarise yourself with all the instruments and gauges in the cockpit of the car, and the race information that is displayed in the top right-hand corner of the screen. The instrumentation is comprehensive: fuel guages, tyre wear indicators, rev counter, oil pressure indicator and the turbo boost control are all displayed and add a lot to the professional and slick graphics of the game.

The rear view mirrors in particular are very impressive, and you can actually get a fair idea how many cars are behind you – and how close they are!

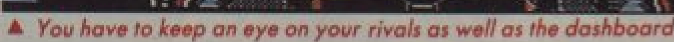
You can at this point, if you wish, go straight into the first race of the season, the *most* sensible course of action is to go the Fiorano race track – the home of the Ferrari Formula One team – to get your car tuned up properly and get some practise driving the car on the Fiorano test track.

When you arrive in Fiorano a display of the Fiorano paddock is shown. From here the simulation lets you test your car on the track; go into the pits for checks on the car; take the car into the garage for major over-hauls (like replacing the engine); test the car's aerodynamics in the wind tunnel or you can load up the lorries and fly across the world to compete in one of the Championship Grand Prixs.

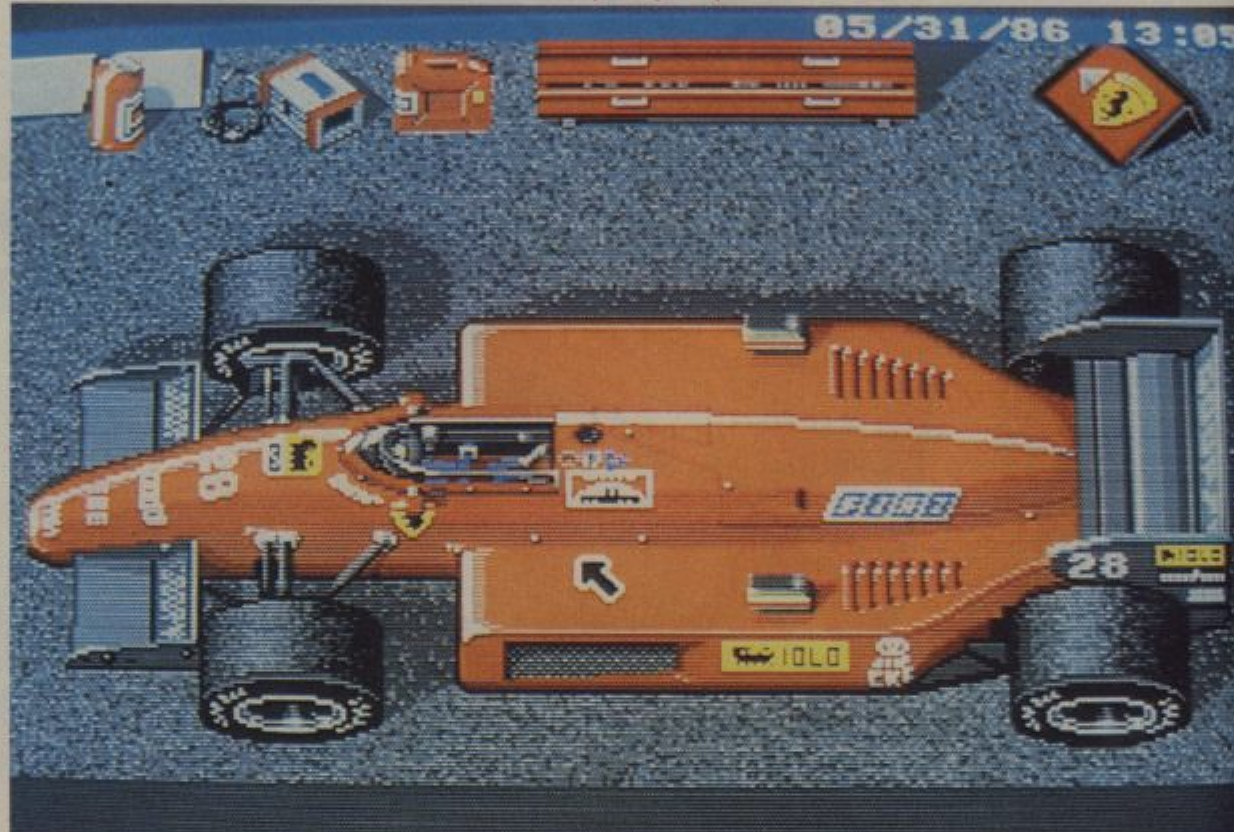
HIT A KEY TO END DEMO



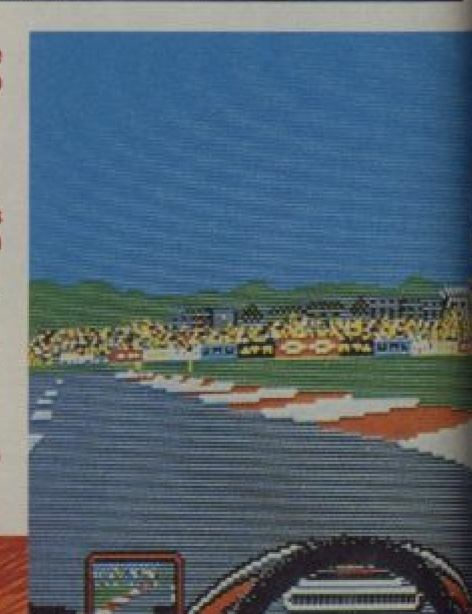


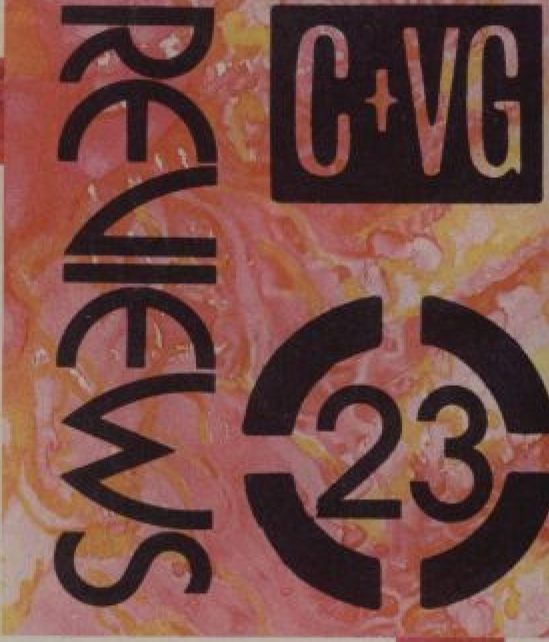


▲ You have to keep an eye on your rivals as well as the dashboard.

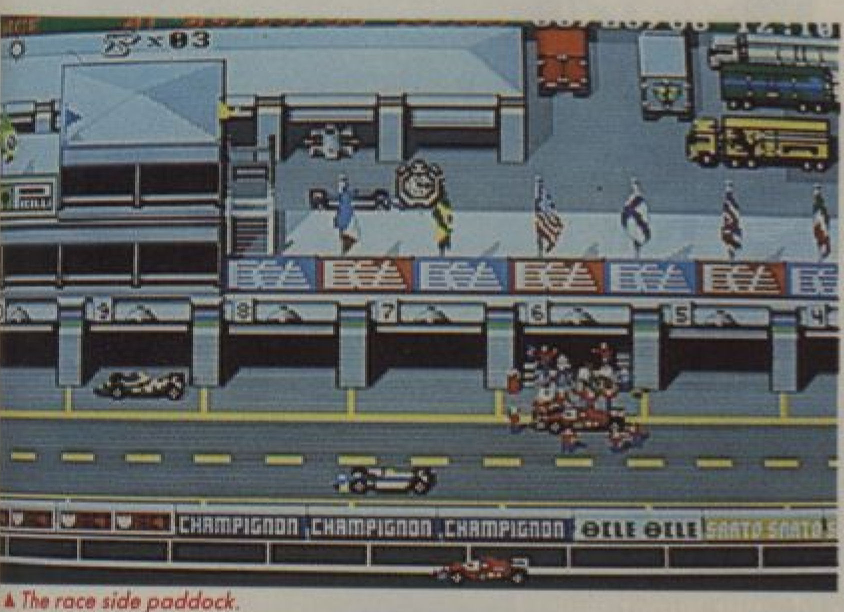


▲ The Ferrari in the pit for last minute tune-up.





FORMULA 1



▲ *The race side paddock.*







▼ *Steering can prove difficult sometimes!*

▲ *Choose your destination and then catch the plane.*

The game allows you to play at three different levels – Formula One, Two and Three. It's best to start the game at the Formula Three level as you don't need to worry about changing gear and the team manager makes suggestions as to tyre combinations, the suspension, turboboost and gear-box settings.

The Wind Tunnel part of the game is one of the best graphic screens in *Ferrari Formula One.* In this section you can alter the angle of the wings of your Ferrari to make it more aerodynamic and change the car's road handling characteristics. The graphics of the wind whipping over the top of the car are brilliant.

Once you've taken care of setting up the car its time to hit the tarmac and try out your beautiful racing machine.

It's here that you must learn how to treat your car and how to steer. I imagine, from complexity and detail of the game, that the car steers very much like a real Ferrari – it's difficult. It is very easy to oversteer and you'll often drive off the track or end up doing an 180 degree spin.

Having mastered driving the car (!), it's time to load up the lorries and take off for the first race of the season – The Brazilian Grand Prix in Rio.

Each Grand Prix begins with a practice lap two days before the race, in the afternoon is the first qualifying race where you must try your hardest to get a good lap time. The next day there is another practise and the final qualifying race.

On the morning of the race there is 30 minute warming-up session, and then it's your opportunity to get on the stating grid and become world champion.

Apart from my criticism about not feeling as if I was driving at 200mph, the game is undoubtedly a classy piece of software that will appeal to anyone with a real interest in motor racing.

Ferrari Formula One is sophisticated, complex, testing and very absorbing game perhaps it's only problem is that it's not very exciting.

► **GRAPHICS**	**8**
► **SOUND**	**7**
► **VALUE**	**6**
► **PLAYABILITY**	**7**

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SHUK + doode
ART: SIMON HARRISON
SCRIPT: SIMON HARRISON TIM CROWFOOT
LETTERS: IVOR WIGGETT
NOT EVEN THE POLICE ARE YET AWARE OF OUR LITTLE VISITORS. THREE DAYS NOW AND STILL NOTHING. WHEN WILL THEY SHOW THEMSELVES?


NOTHING. NOTHING. NOTHING.
HOWITZER
THOSE POLICE REPORTS I HACKED INTO YESTERDAY WERE USELESS. THEY'RE AS MUCH IN THE DARK AS I AM. IRONIC THAT I SHOULD TURN TO THEM FOR HELP... NOTHING IS SAFE FROM THE SCHRANK PANTHER. NOT CONFI-DENTIAL POLICE COMPUTER FILES, CERTAINLY NOT THEIR EVIDENCE.. NOW THERE'S A THING.


A SKULL AND BOOK BOTH OF INDETERMINATE AGE, UNKNOWN ORIGIN AND COMPOSITION. FOUND IN THE AFTERMATH OF AN EXPLOSION AND RAGING FIRE...
POOL
COKE


I WIPED THE FILE.
TDK
SONY
I TRANSFERRED THE EVIDENCE.
HOWITZER
THE BEER FOR MEN!
THE AUTHORITIES WILL NOT BE PLEASED.


BUT STILL MY SEARCH IS FRUITLESS. WHERE CAN THEY BE?

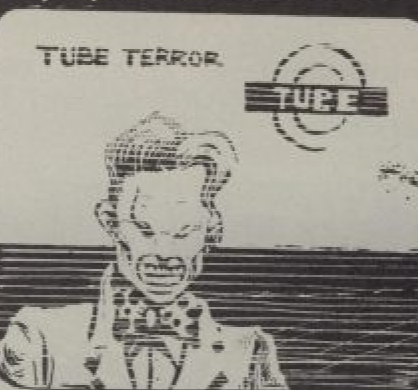

I'LL SNATCH THE EVIDENCE TONIGHT, BEFORE IT'S MISSED. THERE SHOULDN'T BE ANY RECORD OF WH...
THREE DAYS AGO ON THE LATE TRAIN MAN. TWO UGLY KIDS, ONE OF THEM HAD A BIG GUN.. WHAT?... WELL THEY PULLED THE EMERG-ENCY BRAKE. JUST LIKE THAT... WHAT?... OF COURSE I'M UPSET MAN! I BROKE THREE FINGERS WHEN SOME FAT GUY LANDED ON ME

SENSELESS AND BIZARRE! THIS IS DAN DAN YOUR UP TO THE MINUTE ROVING MAN BRINGING YOU THE UP TO THE MINUTE NEWS ON THE ROVING PROGRAMME. MONSTERS ON THE UNDER-GROUND! DEVILS IN CENTRAL LONDON! CHARLES SMITH, NIGHTWATCHMAN AT THE WORLD FAMOUS TOYSHOP HAMLEYS OF LONDON, RESIGNED TODAY AFTER SENSATIONAL CLAIMS!...

YES FOLKS OLD CHAS INSISTS HE WAS BRUTALLY SAVAGED BY A STUFFED TOY THAT LEAPT OFF THE "UGGLY KUDDLY" DOLL RACK WHILE HE DID HIS ROUNDS ON TUESDAY NIGHT. "IT TRIED TO SHOOT ME" HE SAID, "IT BIT MY FOOT" ARNOLD PEEM, SHOP MANAGER, DISMISSED THE CLAIMS AS. "THE BIGGEST LOAD OF CODSWALLOP I'VE EVER HEARD. THE OLD FOOL PROBABLY GOT DRUNK ON DUTY AND FELL DOWN SOME STAIRS. BUT DON'T QUOTE ME ON THAT."

NEVERTHELESS MR. SMITH'S ASSAILANTS APPARENTLY CRASHED THROUGH THE FRONT OF THE SHOP AND WERE LAST SEEN FLEEING INTO OXFORD STREET TUBE STATION WITHOUT PAYING THEIR FARE! THE ATTACKERS WERE DESCRIBED AS BEING "SMALL AND HIDEOUS TO LOOK UPON. ONE WAS BALD, THE OTHER HAD THIS OUTRAGE-OUS HAIRSTYLE AND GLASSES. THE BALD ONE SHOUTED A LOT."

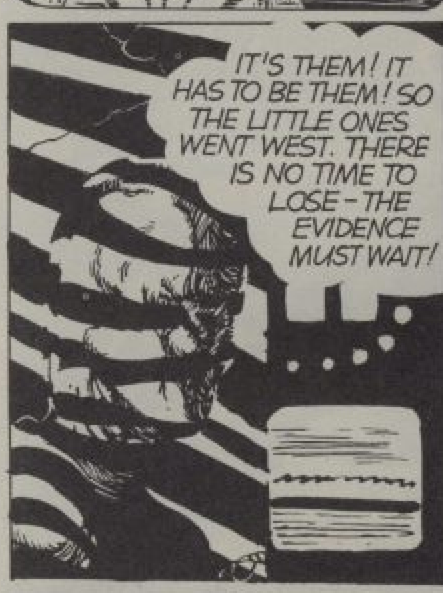
MALFORMED MIDGETS MANIACS MARAUDING OUR METROPOLIS? OR MYSTERIOUS MYTH? THERE'S NOT MUCH TO GO ON FOLKS, BUT WE'LL KEEP YOU INFORMED, HERE ON THE ROVING PROGRAMME. NEXT UP, EXPLODING HAMSTERS IN HAMPSTEAD! BUT FIRST, HERE'S A LITTLE MESSAGE FROM OUR SPONSORS....

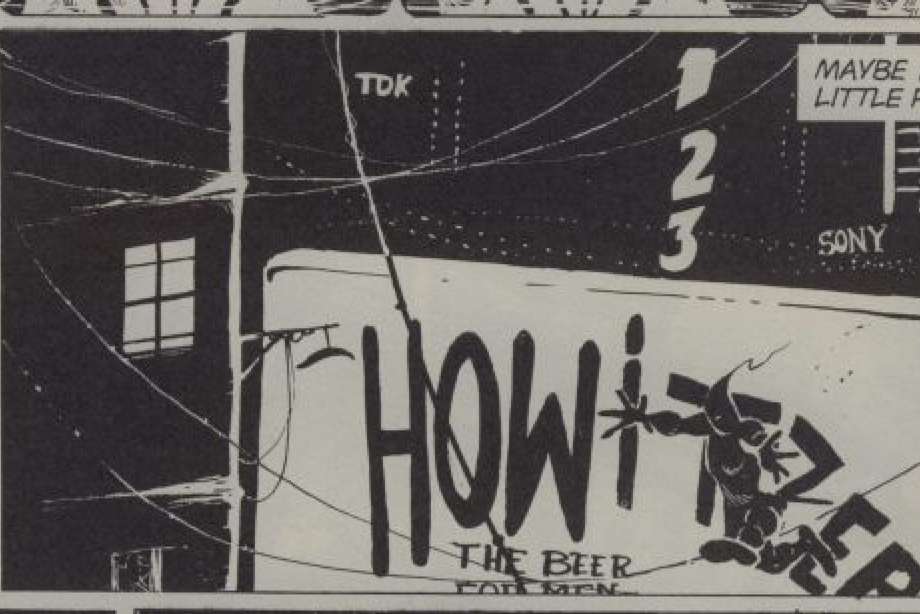




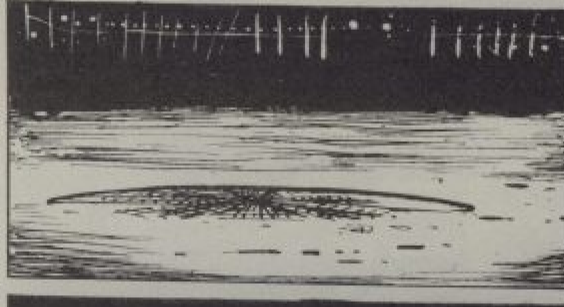










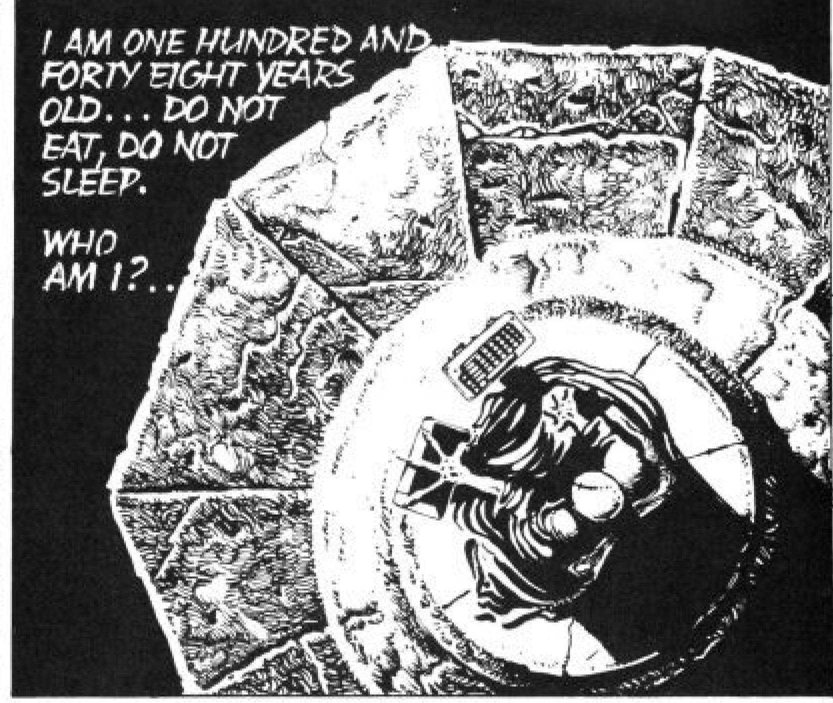














I HAVE SIX STRONG SONS BUT DEPEND ON NO ONE. CANNOT SEE CANNOT HEAR, BUT NOTHING MAY PASS ME UNNOTICED. MY SUPERIORS FEAR ME, MY BOYS REVERE ME. I MURDERED MY WIFE, WITH HER LAST BREATH SHE NAMED ME. I AM THE LEADER OF THE KNIGHTS OF THE WHITE CAMELIA

WHO AM I?...



PHILIPPE ULRICH / DIDIER BOUCHON

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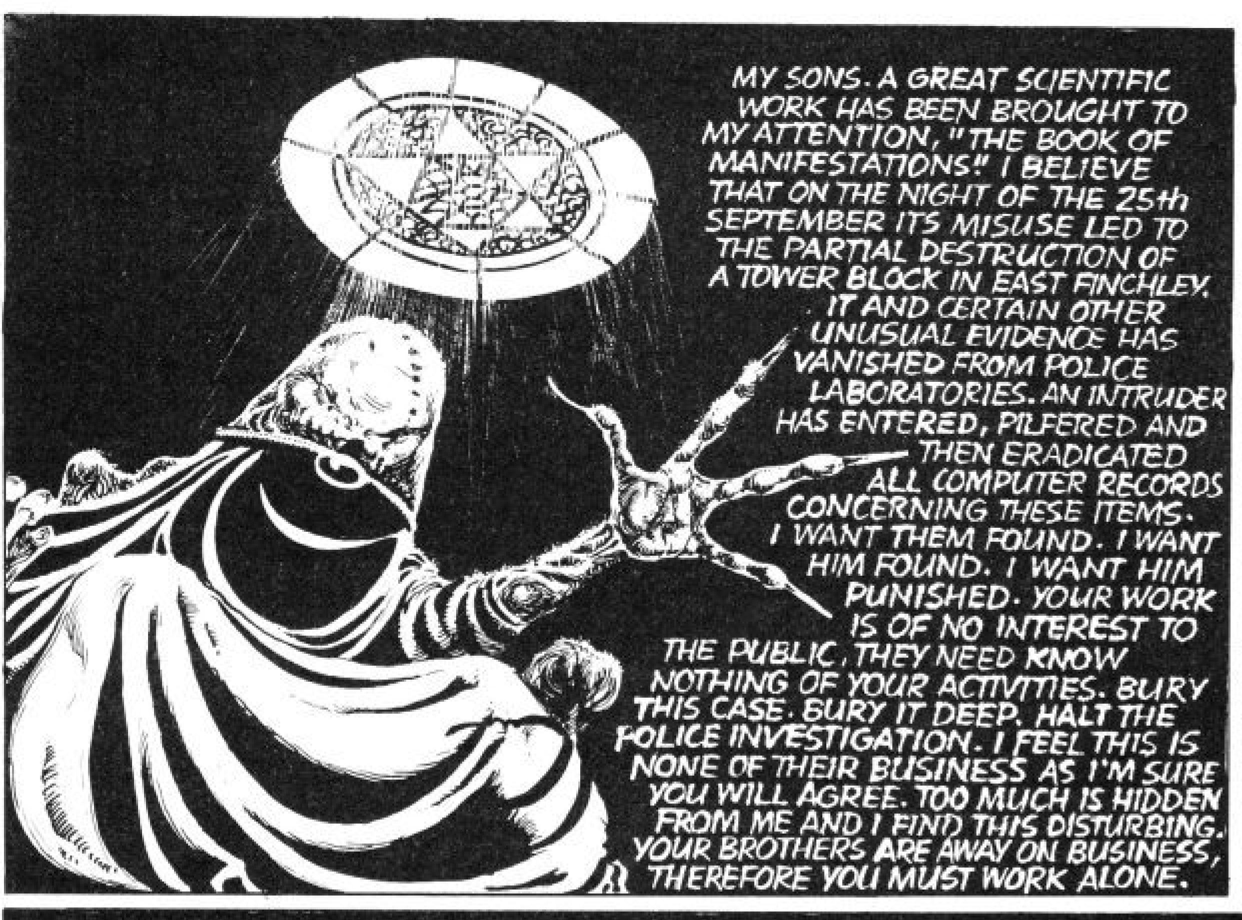


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Okay, it's time to join the frame game again. First up is Simon Hal, from Rotterdam, Holland. His offering on the Amiga is a classy *Outrun* and the mystic ninja. Shane Parris, from Llanelly Hill, near Abergavenny, captures *Ratsan* and *Renegade* ads with pixel perfection. Lars Sandness, Norway, harks back to the Bug Hunters on his Amiga.

Christopher Slinn, from Alderney, takes his Amstrad into orbit with this spaceman, into action with a Tomcat and delves into mysteries of the tarot. And Alastar Moffatt, from Blackpool, shows that the Spectrum still has a lot to offer with these classy pics. As does Stuart Galt, from Dumbartonshire, and Bill Bolton, Clwyd, North Wales. Finally, D. James, from Braunton, North Devon, puts his ST through its paces with Marilyn Monroe.



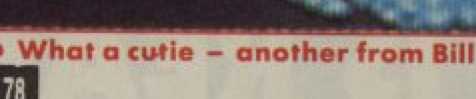
• Bill Bolton's winning smile



• Space face by Stuart Galt



• What a cutie – another from Bill





• Marilyn Monroe – from D. James



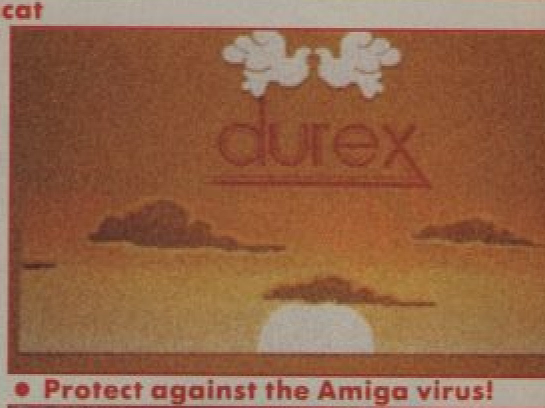
• Simon Hal's ninja warrior



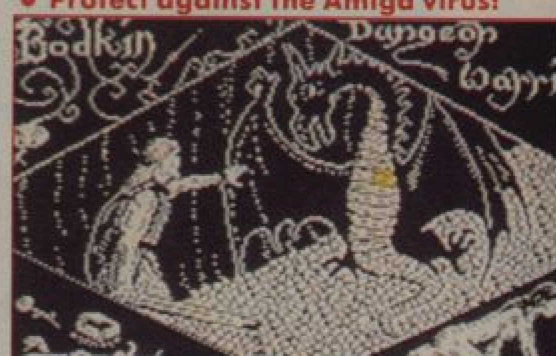
• Chris Slinn's Amstrad tomcat



• Spaced out – Chris Slinn strikes again



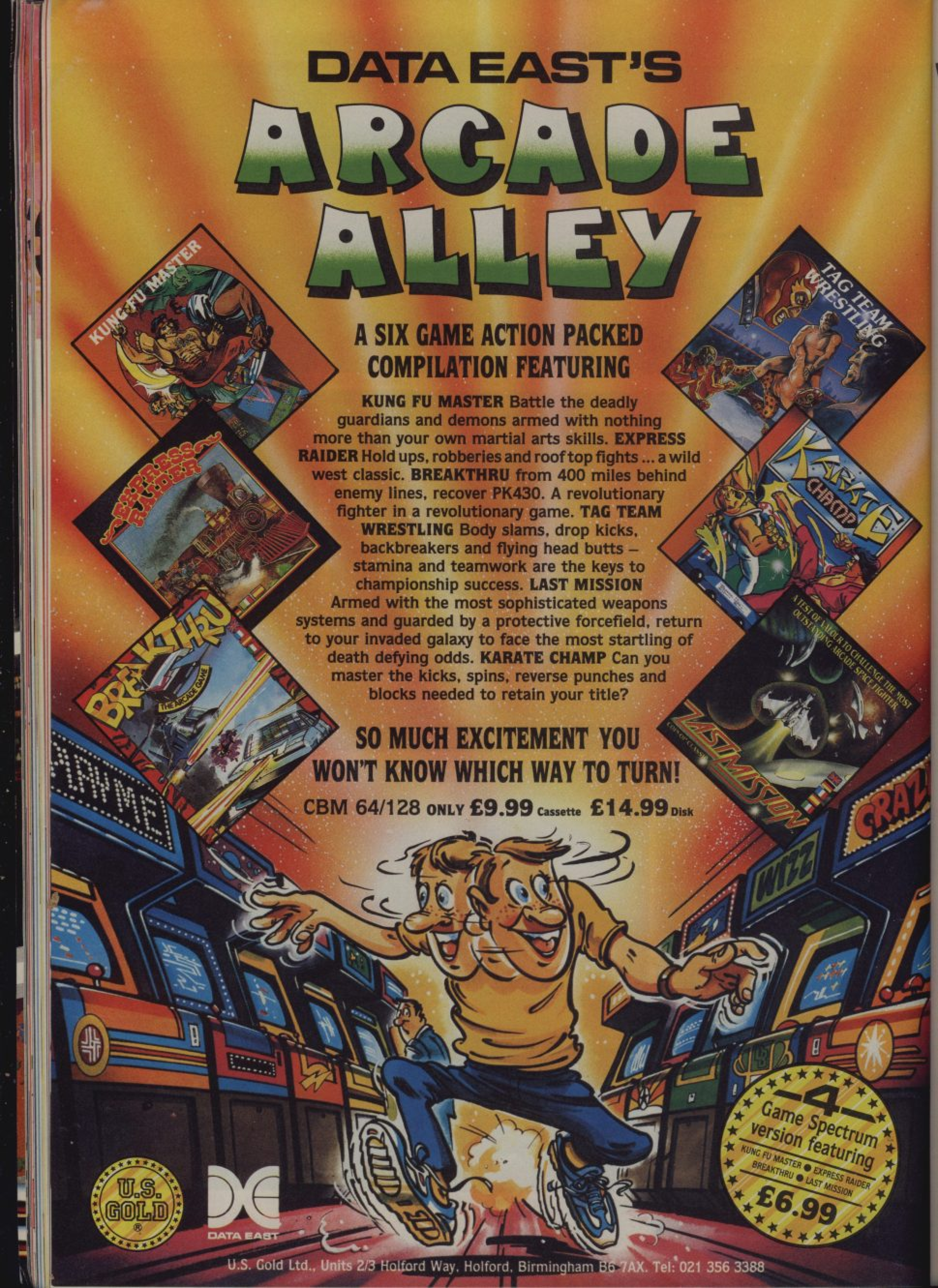
• Protect against the Amiga virus!



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ADVENTURE

helpline

It isn't often that I give away the basic secrets of a good adventure, but **Sheila Dwyer** of Bracknell was certainly a deserving cause! Her sons got a Spectrum for Christmas, and with *The Count* still unsolved, Sheila was worried: "I shall never know how to kill the Count, and I must admit I am curious. So before the poor old Count finally leaves our premises, can you provide me with the answer ...?" So I did – how could I refuse a request like that?

Wow – here's some more oldies coming up! Remember Pettigrew – the chappie from Shard's Software, whose Diaries featured in an adventure? **Mrs. Rush** of Pinner, keeps finding the Underground shut in the second part of the game, and she can't get Barry Maniloe's room number. Mrs. Rush also asks if there is a quick way of getting to the boat in *Sphinx*, and what to do at the island.

Finally, *Adventure* (that's the name of the adventure) is bothering our Mrs. Rush. If my memory serves me correctly, this was originally available on ye olde Acorn Atom, and I reviewed it back in August 1982 - before our new Big-ed got out of his nappies and into *C+VG* as a staff writer! Mrs. Rush and her fellow adventurers are sure there is a way into the dungeon other than by killing the princess, but where?

There can be no doubt that game of the month in the *Helpline* mail, is *Rigel's Revenge*. Was there a single letter that didn't mention it? Well, just about! How do you get past the hut by the minefield, asks **Nigel Budd** of Aberystwyth. Nigel would also like to enter the bungalow without getting caught. Of course, the net is the main problem - so peruse the clue section for a few answers.

"I don't think it is fair to compare adventure systems," writes **Philip Riordan**, from Tipperary. "Most people who buy games realise that they will probably play a game on another format, ie playing *Guild of Thieves* on an ST and then playing it on a Spectrum. So seeing a low rating for a Spectrum version that is also available on an ST will dishearten ST owners and in some cases they will miss a great game."

I disagree, Philip – the ratings are split into different categories, and the review will generally refer to which version was played for review.

Venom is a game that has **Paul Hardy** scratching his head. He can't open the tap room door, nor find the statue of Venom. A football fanatic too, Paul is having trouble with his car. The mechanic he called tells him there's no point in changing the wheel, and promptly drives off! But worse still, for a *Football Frenzy* player he can't persuade the players to go on the field! That is ridiculous!

Or is it? **Mark Griffiths** of Huyton, can't even do a simple thing like making a phone call in this game, for he can't use the index. And in *Lifeterm*, Mark would dearly love to discover how to use the data terminal.

Yup! *Jinxter* can be solved by mere mortals! Assuming, that is, **Anthony Webber** and **Matthew Carmody** of Chew Stoke are not demi – gods! Are they the first to solve *Jinxter*, they ask?

ADVENTURE clues

ADVENTURE CLUES

Help came this month from: Tom Karlsen, Kolbjornsvik, Norway; Nigel Budd, Aberystwyth; M. Craven, Lincoln; Anthony Webber and Matthew Carmody, Chew Stoke.

THE COUNT:
He's not in the box at night – nobble the lock then!

JINXTER:
Ash should not be overlooked; it may be overlooked in the end!

GUILD OF THIEVES:
A fly jam could jar a spider.

LURKING HORROR:
The stubborn wall must be tackled either from both sides, or from only the other side.

UNINVITED:
Use the no-ghost bottle to kill the lady. To pass the dogs, say INSTANTUM ILLUMINARIS ABRAXAS. To pass the chapel, say SPECAN HEAFORD ABRAXAS to the statue head.

RIGEL'S REVENGE:
After examining the panel in the tank, leave it, and return later and press the switch, to open the cupboard. Don't get strung up – throw some rubble!

FRANKENSTEIN:
From home to ravine: E,E,N,N,E,N,W. Look around to find the tree, and make sure you jump to the ground!

news

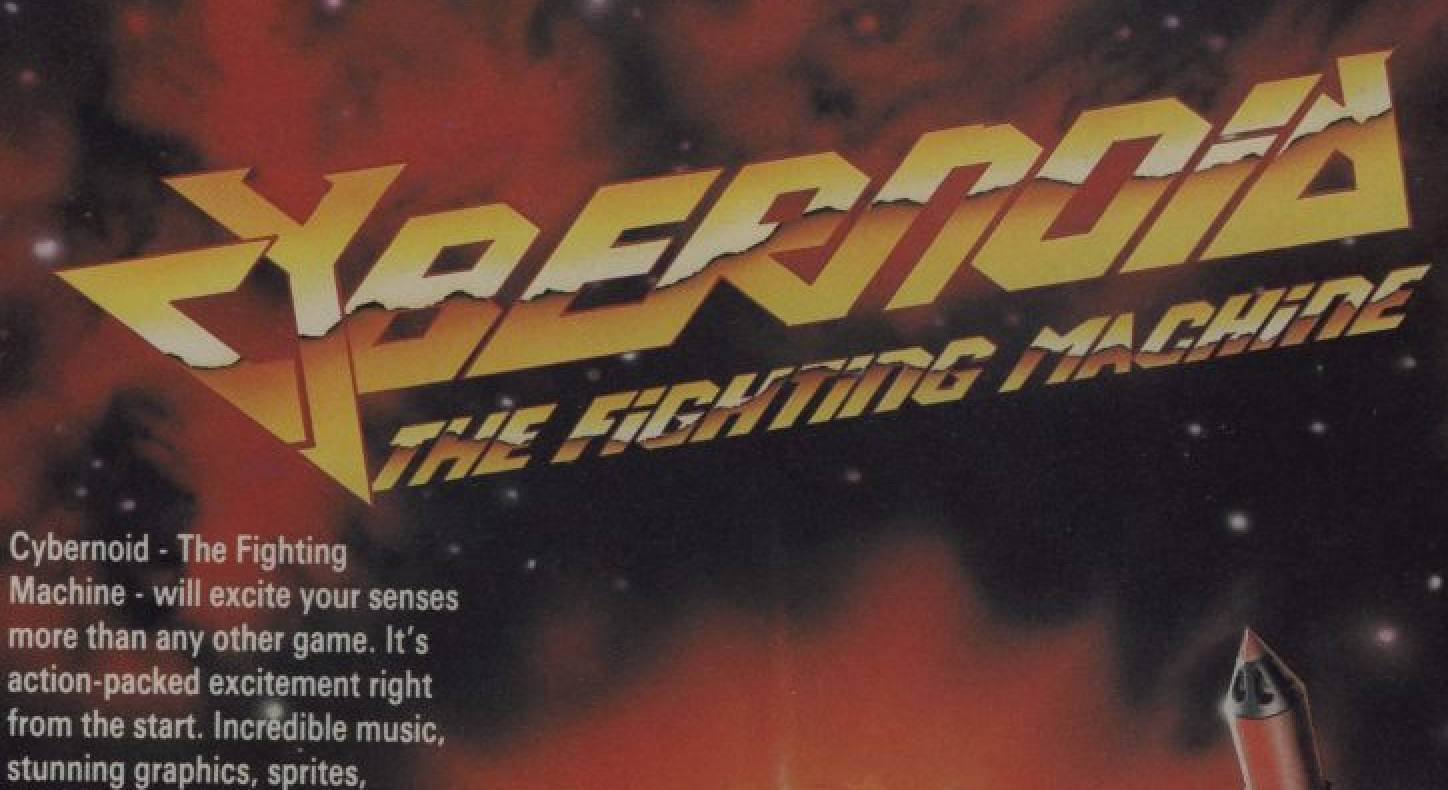
Mindfighter is expected to be released by Activision during March or April, for a wide range of machines, including C-64 tape and disk, Spectrum 48/128, Amstrad CPC, Amstrad PCW 8256, IBM PC, Amiga, and Atari ST. The Spectrum version will look to see what size machine it is in, and then load extra modules into a 128K machine. Prices are not yet announced. *C+VG* will be bringing you a full review next month.

Legend Of The Sword is a new graphic adventure about to be sprung by Rainbird Software. Written by a new name in the adventure field, Eastbourne based Silicon Software, Legend, will be available for Amiga and Atari ST for £19.95. Due for release during March, we will be bringing you a full review in the next issue.

Based on Spanish exploration of the New World, **Seven Cities Of Gold** has you as an old world adventurer, setting sail in search of legendary fortune and hidden gold mines. From Mississippi to Amazon, from the Great Lakes to the Straits of Magellan, the adventurer may find himself face to face with the ancient Incas, or tribes of hunters, and must learn how to interact with them.

Infocom announces a new form of interactive fiction, Infocomics. Branching storylines without puzzles, Infocomics will be illustrated in comic style by Tom Snyder Productions.

Three titles are already lined up: Steve Meretsky's **'Lane Mastadon vs the Blubbermen,** a 1930s sci-fi comic spoof; **Pit of a Thousand Screams,** a superhero tale by Amy Briggs, featuring Gamma Force; and **Assault on – Egreth Castle,** a Zorkquest fantasy adventure.



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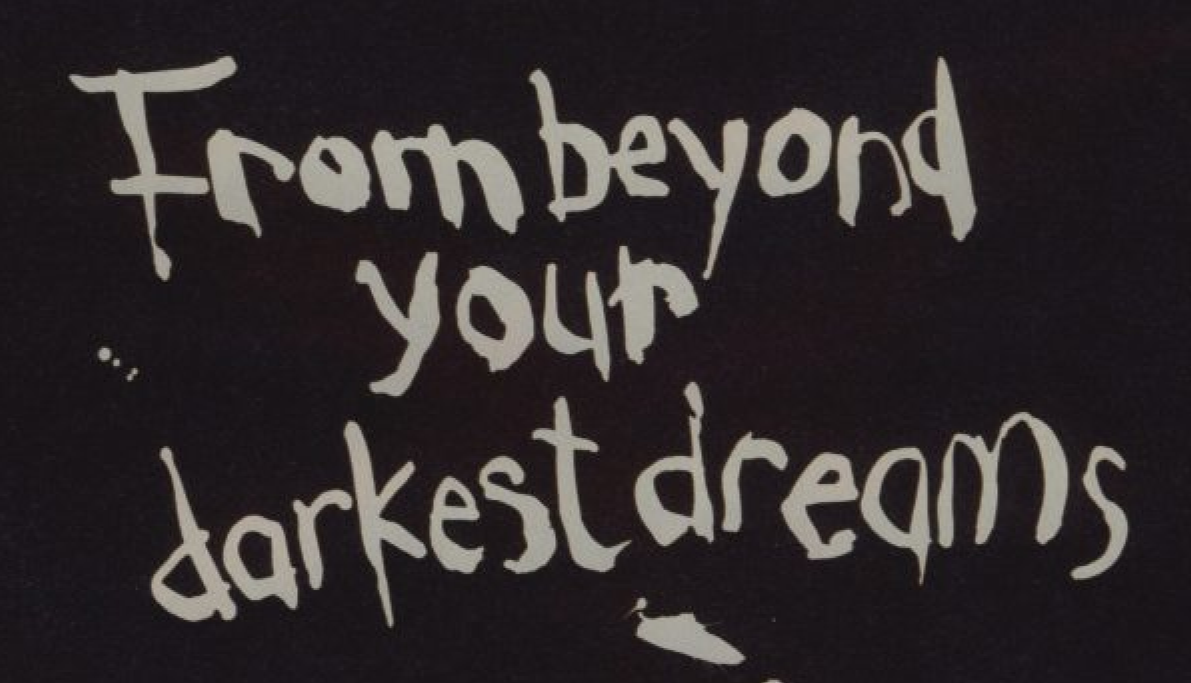
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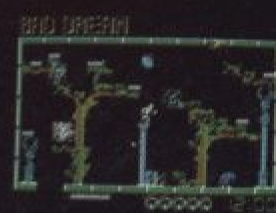
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If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my Soul to take ..."*











Frightmare - A computer game for the Commodore 64, Spectrum, Amstrad and soon on the IBM PC, Cassette £9.95. Disk £14.95 (IBM £19.95).

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► **KEITH**

Border Zone, written by Infocom co-founder and co-author of *Zork,* Marc Blank, is another departure from Infocom's usual style. Like Nord and Bert, it is split into chapters – three in this case. Also, it has built-in Invisiclues; more on them later. But unlike any previous Infocom adventure, this one is played in real time. That means the clock keeps ticking while you are typing, and while you are thinking between prompts.

The first chapter is set on a train near the border of Frobnia, an eastern bloc country. As an American businessman, you are startled when a man suffering from gunshot wounds staggers into your compartment, shoves a secret document in your hands, and begs you to deliver it to his contact at the border station of Ostnitz. He tells you the recognition phrase, and staggering out, you next see him falling off the roof of the train.

Your job is to get information safely into the hands of the contact, one of the many people on the crowded station platform, when the train arrives at the border. But beware! Your contact will address you in Frobnian. Here is where the Tourists Guide Book included in the package will become essential – without it you may all too soon hear the words "Oopzi dazi. Ouzna gotcha." (Pardon me. You're under arrest.)

Next, you play the American spy who passed the businessman the document. Escaping by jumping off the roof of the train, you now have to cross the border on foot. The plot to this chapter I found to be extremely open, with no real pointers as to which way to approach the problems, and for the first time in an Infocom game, I began to lose interest.


● *I spy a tourist*

Finally, you get to be a double agent, who passed the documents to the American spy in the first place. The documents concern the assasination of an American ambassador, and you must prevent it without blowing your KGB cover. Here again, the plot is somewhat open, but there are some obvious things to do to keep you going.

Each chapter is a separate adventure, and because of the many fully implemented garden paths along which the player is led, turns out to be staggeringly small once completed.

For example, in chapter three the major problem revolves around concealing the fact that you have the document. There are many combinations of possibilities which may be attempted, most of which will involve a restart. These all have to be tried just to be discounted, before, finally, the actual solution is enacted, and suddenly the affair is over in no time.

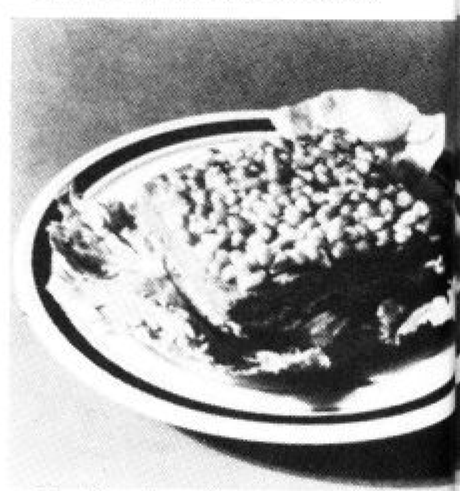
Chapter three gives you 15 real-time minutes to prevent the assassination, which is time for little more than about forty commands. It is necessary to play the chapter a number of times to map it out, before attempting to carry out the quest for real.

The package contains the tourist guide, which is quite an amusing read, and produced in the best infocom spoof-document style. You get a book of Frobnian Railway matches (absolutely authentic in appearance, and completely non-flammamble), a map of the border zone, and a business card, as well as the usual instruction manual, catalogue, special offer card, and disk. The special offer is available from the USA.

There are two game speeds: FAST and SLOW, and these may be changed whilst playing, but I didn't find the real-time element added anything to the game – in fact, I found it a pain. Adventures are for thinking through problems, and it is all too easy in *Border Zone* to act in a hurry because of the clock, and find yourself having to restart as a result. On a 64 (on which I was playing) that is no joke! So as a result, I often found it necessary to use the PAUSE command, especially in the third chapter, where certain replies have to be carefully read, and notes taken, to deduce the whereabouts of the sniper – it changes every time.

And so to the Invisiclues.




● *Food for thought*


● *A tender trap?*



Type HINT, and a warning is given. Type HINT again, and you get a set of clue headings for the chapter you are currently in. Select one from the list, and you get a sequence of hints for the chosen problem, in increasing order of helpfulness. The sequence can be started at any time.

The trouble with clues are – they are there! Let's face it, it is all very well saying you don't need to look at them' but the temptation to think 'just this one then . . .' is all too great – again and again and again! And of course, the clue headings themselves give quite a lot away, for in them you discover things that you hadn't yet recognised as problems. Nope! I don't like 'em!

The whole package nowhere near approaches the complexity of one single adventure three times the size of one chapter. In fact, it could just as easily have been a three-parter on cassette. Not enough to get your teeth into and settle down comfortably with in the sense that we have come to expect from Infocom adventures.

► **VOCABULARY**	9
► **ATMOSPHERE**	8
► **PERSONAL**	7
► **VALUE**	6



PØLICE QUEST

► **SUPPLIER: SIERRA/ ACTIVISION**
► **MACHINES: ATARI ST: AMIGA; APPLE II; MACINTOSH; IBM PC: £29.99**
► **REVIEWER: KEITH**

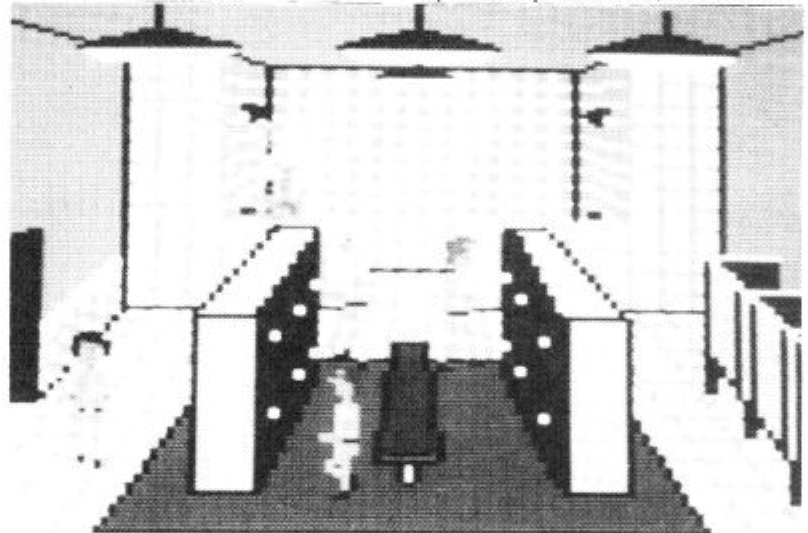
Another in the series of animated 3-D adventures from Sierra, *Police Quest* follows a similar format to *Space Quest*. Virtually the full screen is an animated picture, with your character moveable by either joystick or mouse. Moving through a door or other exit starts another graphic loading from the disk, and after a short delay, you arrive in the next room. Run from a hard drive, for which installation instructions are included, these junctions should be speeded up considerably.

At any time, text commands may be entered from the keyboard, and appear on the line below the picture. Replies are displayed in windows superimposed over the picture until ENTER is pressed, and can range in size from a few words to virtually a whole screenful. Therefore, although there are many elements of an arcade adventure, the game is basically problem driven rather than skill driven.

Having said that, it is worth noting that on the ST version that I played, control is far easier with joystick than with mouse. In mouse mode, a controllable arrow must be placed in front of the character, and dragged with the button held down in the direction in which you wish to move him – sort of 'tempting' him to follow. I found it extremely difficult to get the little fellow through confined gaps. In joystick mode, which must be set up from the keyboard, the arrow disappears, and the joystick effectively 'becomes' your character, allowing a far more definite control.

The game starts in the police station, where a briefing is about to be held. I didn't realise this, and the first time around, and walked straight into the locker room, which was a hive of activity. A few 'colleagues' were changing, one was having a shower, and beneath the door of a toilet cubicle could be seen the feet and trousers of its occupant. I thought I'd pop into a cubicle before having a shower, but I just could not open a door.

But I'd missed the briefing, so next time around I attended. I was joined by four or five other cops, who filed in and took up their positions, followed

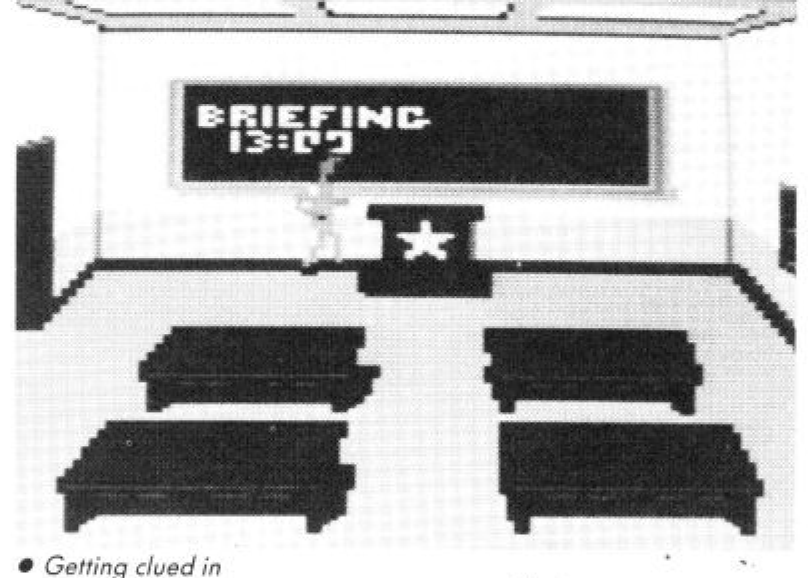


● *Information station*

by the boss, who stood behind the lectern and delivered his address. Kitting myself out, I decided it was time to go out on patrol, and soon I was in the car park, about to set off. Here the game takes a different format, showing a bird's eye view of a section of the town of Lytton, and its highways.

For those who enjoy a mixed format of joystick and text, with a bit of simulation thrown in, it must be a winner.

► **VOCABULARY**	7
► **ATMOSPHERE**	7
► **PERSONAL**	7
► **VALUE**	7



● *Getting clued in*

ADVENTURE

SHADES

Shades is a multi-user adventure accessible to all Micronet and Prestel Subscribers. Keith Campbell plays the game and meets its inventor.

Computer adventure games, as difficult and as complex as they can sometimes be, are a one-way process. It's you versus the machine. Add a few more players and things become more interesting and challenging.

And that's the attraction behind multi-user games, of which *Shades* is the latest example. It's the brainchild of Neil Newell and is currently accessible to subscribers of Micronet 800 and Prestel.

The key to it is the involvement, the knowledge there are other people out there, waiting to react to your decisions and you to theirs.

As Neil says: "The scenario is really there as a backdrop to provide the vehicle for the development of the player's character."

Character building is all-important, to make progress to the very top of the tree and become Arch Wizard. Play behaviour has to be policed. There is nothing more soul-destroying than constantly being knocked back to the rank of Novice, by some thug intent on trying to kill you every time he comes across you.

So Arch Wizards can cut players out of the game if they become a nuisance to others. "Strangely enough, one of our biggest all-time killers was a surgeon in real life!"

Swearing, too, can get you banned. Utter an obscenity when an Arch Wiz is around, and you may be out with no warning.

"The last time we arranged to meet in the bar of a London pub," says Neil. "Seventy people turned up."

Seventy people took the trouble, eh? Sounds as if something interesting is going on here – let's enter the gateway, and see what gives . . .

► MACHINES: ALL COMPUTERS THAT CAN ACCESS PRESTEL
► PRICE: MICRONET GATEWAY – 1.62 PER MINUTE VIEWDATA MODE; 2.00p PER MINUTE SCROLLING MODE; PRESTEL GATEWAY – 6.00p PER MINUTE
► REVIEWER: KEITH CAMPBELL

Shades is a multi-user adventure, available to anyone with access to Prestel, or preferably to Micronet, through your computer. This means that you need a modem, some communications software, a suitable telephone point and a subscription. The subscription to Micronet is payable on top of the basic Prestel subscription, but once a subscriber, playing *Shades* becomes much cheaper.

A multi-user adventure is fundamentally different from a 'normal' adventure, played on a stand-alone computer. It is played in 'real time' (more on the frustrations of that later!), and there is no way of 'completing' it.

Points are gained by collecting treasures, and depositing them in the Mad King's Room in the castle – one of the locations in the castle area of *Shades*.

Additional points can be won by killing 'mobiles' (independent computer generated characters) and other players in the game, although this latter course of action is frowned on somewhat, and too much of it can result in disciplinary action by a Wizard.

Up to eight players can populate a game, and there are a number of games running simultaneously to ensure that anyone who wants to should be able to find a vacant slot.

If killed, points are lost, and the player gets knocked out of the game, having to re-select oneof the games in progress to continue playing.

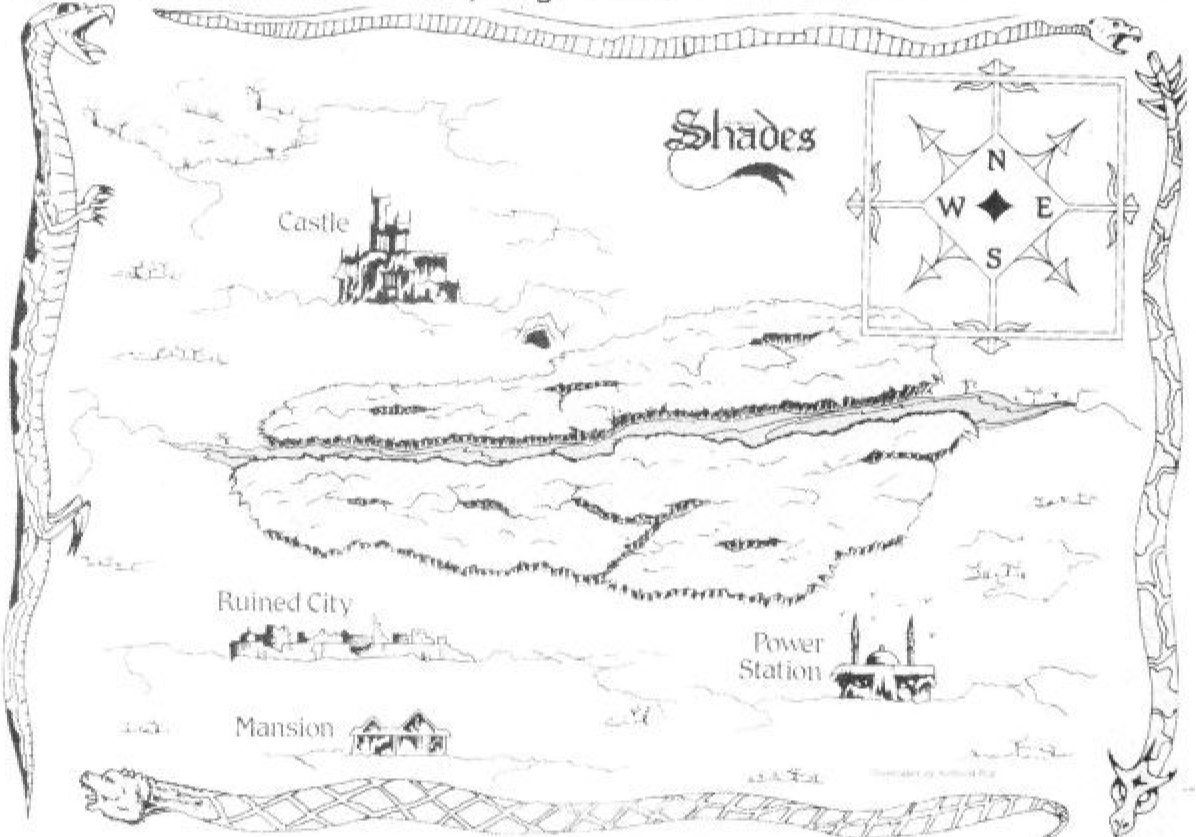
In the normal course of events, all the treasures would be gobbled up and lost forever. To overcome this, every so often there is a 'game reset', when everything starts from scratch, and the players have to link in to one of the games again.

There are puzzles, but of course, once solved they can be romped through quickly during the many inevitable replays. The thing to do seems to be to find a game that has just started, and rush to where you know the treasure is, grabbing as much as you can before the other players get there.

There are effectively more than 760 locations in *Shades*, and they are being changed and added to all the time.

It is all great fun – more a way of life, perhaps, than an adventure game. Provided you can afford the phone bill, plus nearly £1 per hour, (there are connect-time charges during the daytime on weekdays, as well) then it's worth taking the risk that you won't become totally addicted to it.

► **VOCABULARY**	**7**
► **ATMOSPHERE**	**8**
► **PERSONAL**	**9**





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Atari ST £19.99 Disk
CBM 64/128
£9.99 Cassette £14.99 Disk

Screenshots from Amstrad version.

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FANTASY ROLE-PLAYING

Wayne here with another batch of FRP news, views and reviews. This month sees the review of the best computerized FRP on the market, as well as the latest release from Games Workshop. Live role playing is back and we take a peek at some new plastic orcs.

► Warhamer 40,000: Rogue Trader
► Publisher: Games Workshop
► Price: £14.95
► Rating: 76%

G.W.'s futuristic brainchild. *Warhammer 40,000,* a game system that took years to construct, has finally hit the shops like a comet hitting the earth. The shock waves of its impact are still being felt all over the country, so let's pick up on the reports that have come in.

Our first eye witness is a roleplayer from London. He describes what he saw: "Well mate, I was at Gamesday at the time it arrived. Gordon Bennet! It appeared from nowhere and the myriad of beautiful colours hit me minces in an instant.

An historian from Nottingham expounds about the history: "Oh yes, this incident has been on the cards for some time. G.W. have been tinkering about with other projects, but in a different timescale. At first they created "Warhammer Fantasy Battle Rules", which have been a best selling mass battle fantasy wargame for years. They then mutated this into "Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay", which was a single character role playing game for use in their world of fantasy. Now they have rocketed the basis of the afforementioned games into the future, combined a few of the ideas behind them with some quantum physics and produced *Warhammer 40,000.*"

We whizz off to Yorkshire now for a quick summary of the playability of the game from a member of the Flat cap and ferrets role playing society; "Well lad, we 'ere at t' club have given it a bash, an' 'though we found it a mite tough at first, we now play it on a regular basis, when lads can get together.

Finally up to glasgow we go, to out economic expert for her comments on value for money: "Aye, at £14.95, I found the game a wee bit expensive.



▲ *Warhammer 40,000 – shock waves still being felt.*


▲ *E.O.P.T.P. – has its own newsletter.*

► Empire of the Petal Throne The World of Tekumel
► Author: Professor M. A. R. Barker
► Price: £7.95
► Rating: 83%

When this game was launched in 1980, it was hailed as the next best thing to AD + D, so of course being young, free and employed back in those heady days of youth, I splashed out with my hard earned cash and bought it.

To this day the original is still in my cupboard and it has many well worn pages from continual use. However, the game was withdrawn from the market for some unknown reason and the game obtained a reputation for being complex.

E.O.T.P.T. is a complete games system, so when you buy it, all you have to do is buy the relevant dice and you can play it with your friends in no time at all. It gives you all you need for creating your characters, dealing with combat, discovering the powers of magical items and describing the monsters that a party may encounter.

You get the feeling that the creation of this game was a labour of love and the detail the rulebook goes into is daunting. This game is not explained to you, it is shared with you and it draws you in with it's intimacy. Let me set you a brief example of what The World Of Tekumel is like. In this world, iron and steel are more valuable than gold; four legged creatures like horses and mules do not exist; monsters have six legs rather than two or four. It is a behind of dozens of cultures, supertechnological to primitive savages. It even has its own language which you can try to learn and speak if you wish.

This game is no more complex than any other. The various tables are easy to follow and there are not that many modifiers to deal with.

E.O.P.T.P. is also the only game that I know of to have its own newsletter with lots of more background material and scenarios. A great idea.

FANTASY ROLE-PLAYING

Dungeon Master

► **DUNGEON MASTER**
► **SUPPLIER: FTL GAMES/ MIRRORSOFT, ATARI ST**
► **PRICE: £24.95**

Every now and again a computer game comes along and changes the way we think about games. *Dungeon Master* is one of those game. I have waited a very long time for it to arrive. You see *Dungeon Master* is a computerised Fantasy Role-Playing game and a very good one too.

At first I had doubts. After reading the 28 page story book, the term cliché automatically came to mind. Briefly the storyline is that you are the apprentice to a master wizard who, due to a rare case of foolish enthusiasm, has unleased his alter ego into the world.

This aptly named nasty piece of work is called Chaos, and his main aim is to destroy the whole of civilisation as you know it by plunging the world into a permanent ice age. In order to stop this happening, you are to enter a dungeon, mentally take control of a group of your mortal champions who have failed this mission before, locate the fabled "Firestaff" and then return it to your master, who has unfortunately got himself trapped on another plane.

Only by returning the firestaff can you release him, enabling him to stop the works of Chaos.

I then turned to the rules section which enabled you to play the game and was surprised to find that there are very actual rules to this game at all? It is a "learn as you play" game.

The minute the dungeon doors opened I had the feeling of déjà vu. The game was very similar to "Legacy Of The Ancients" as you have to wander through the dungeon and select your four champions from 28 trapped in paintings hung on the dungeon wall.

You can examine everyone of the champions available and the selection you can control is incredible. You can create your party from Ninjas, Priests, Wizards, Fighters, Yetties, Barbarians, and even a sort of Evil Undead. The champions have all the F.R.P. statistics, including health, stamina, manna (magical abililty), strength and dexterity, to name but a few. There is also an option to analyse each individual champion where you can see what they are wearing on each part of their body, what they have in their backpack (they can hold up to 17 items) and what weapons they are holding.

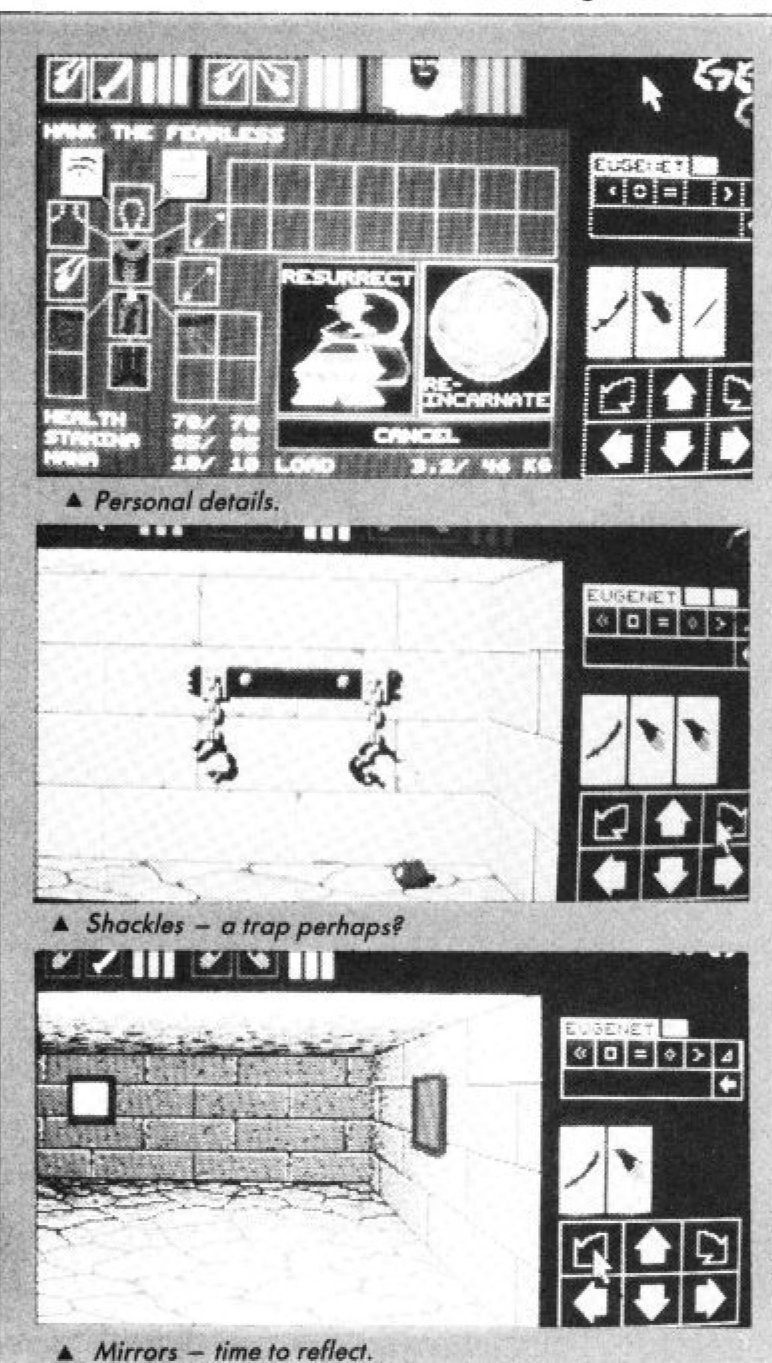
A nice touch is that you can be examining one champion's personal details and then move something from another member of your parties hands immediately to the other champions backpack without switching from each individual champions screen. This saves a great deal of time. Once selected you move off through the dungeon on your mission and into the most enjoyable part of the game.

The mission caters for all sorts of role-players. Many different monsters abound from fear-inducing Mummies to shrieking Screamers, so combat is a must.

Couple of all these elements with hidden passages, illusions, mystic scrolls, trapdoors, food and water problems, etc and you'll see why this game is the closest you'll get on a computer to an over the table game. Overall the graphics are excellent, the sound is clear as a bell and the game is very easily controlled by the mouse, although you can use the keyboard if need be, but I wouldn't advise it. I got over my initial doubts VERY quickly and have spent over 40 hours playing this game without a hint of boredom.

A must for all roleplayers!

► **GRAPHICS** 9
► **SOUND** 8
► **VALUE** 8
► **PLAYABILITY** 9



▲ *Personal details.*

▲ *Shackles – a trap perhaps?*

▲ *Mirrors – time to reflect.*

Toon

► **PUBLISHER: STEVE JACKSON GAMES**
► **SUPPLIER: GAMES OF LIVERPOOL**
► **PRICE: £5.75**
► **RATING: 80%**

If you have been put off trying role playing games by the look of some systems that seem tremendously complicated, you will find Toon a good place to start.

You see *Toon*, a whole F.R.P. game in itself, is based on the wild wacky world of cartoons. It gives you the chance to actually get involved in the world of animated action. As you know, in cartoons that appear on TV anything and everything can happen, without anyone getting killed!

The same goes for this game. You can pick up large anvils and drops them on other characters from mountains, walk out of town and find yourself on another planet and you can even fight to your hearts content and never get put out of the game for long.

The game system is very simple. You need at least two players, one to play the ANIMATOR and one to play a CHARACTER. Of course you can have many more players playing if you wish and this will make it more fun.

The Animator is the person who runs the game. If you take on this role, you must make sure the game keeps moving as well as play the part of the referee. It is your job to co-ordinate the game and play all the Non Player Characters. These range from a massive angry gorilla to a minute fearsome ant. They act in a way that you desire, be it funny or deadly.

If you have never run a game



before, don't worry. The part of the animator is well explained in the book, with a whole chapter devoted on how to be one.

The players have most fun getting to push custard pies in each others faces, throw bombs all over the place and generally have a chaotic time.

The 64 page book is easy to read, packed full of examples, and contains great cartoon like graphics. It is written in a very player-friendly way and bends over backwards to help you. There are optional superstar advanced rules, for those who want a bit more complex game as well as five pre-written adventures for the animator to run.

Miniature Figures

Citadel Miniatures are one of the leading manufacturers of metal fantasy figures in the UK. They turned out a multitude of designs, ranging from Red dragons to half orcs. Now with the release of the new "Warhammer Fantasy Regiments" they nail the criticism that they are too expensive.

With the new regiments you get 60 figures for £9.99 and that works out at only 0.16p per figure. Great value you must agree!

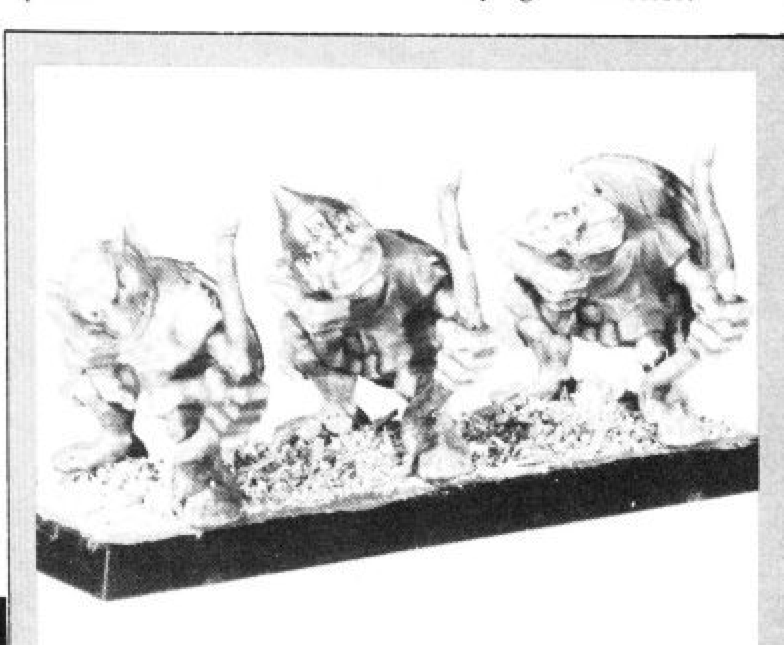
The economies have been made by manufacturing the 25mm models out of a hard styrene plastic, not metal. The change of modelling mediums makes a lot of sense as plastic is lighter, cheaper and much easier to make models out of.

After close scrutiny, even with the assistance of a powerful magnifying lens, I was very pleased to find that the figures still retained the same excellent detail as their metal predessors.

The figures themselves are supplied on ten white 'sprues,' with six creatures and twelve various heads, plus a selection of interchangeable weapons, on each sprue. This means that some assembly is necessary, but fear not as it is very easy. All you have to do is follow the straightforward instructions that are printed on the container. Also included are 60 different slot type bases with 50 optional shields thrown in for good measure. The 60 figures are broken up into the following character classes: 10 Dark Elves. All models have a selection of different heads, whilst the Dwarves, Orcs and Skaven have the choice of optional weapons.

Obviously, Citadel have released these figures to complement Games Workshop's "Warhammer Battle Fantasy" game. They now provide an economical way for players to build up large armies in order for them to actually fight those epic tabletop battles which they have only been able to previously watch at conventions.

On the whole, they are very good value for money and a must for any serious miniature fantasy figure collector.



Letters

A letters page for fantasy-role-playing is one of the most requested features according to the mountains of mail I get. And, hey presto, here it is! This will be the place to air your views, opinions, criticims and general chat. All letters are welcome.

Letter of the month comes from Sian from Walcot, East Swindon, who writes in to say:

● I have found that these people who enjoy computer games such as *Tir-Na-Nog* and *The Hobbit* also enjoy FRP and PBM. I always tend to play computer games, FRP and read Tolkien at the same time and I feel that there is no cure. Is there?
Sian,
Walcot,
East Swindon.

Wayne says: I agree that people who play games, play all kinds of games and not just computer games. I believe there are a lot of people out there who would like to play FRP games but either haven't got the time or the friends who share the same interests. This is why when computerised FRP takes off it will be BIG.

● I really like the FRP column in *C+VG* it is my favourite part! However, I have only recently got into the hobby and I know there are a lot of established FRP out there that I may well have missed. Are you going to review them at some stage?
James Williams,
Dundee.

Wayne says: There are a lot of people in your boat, James. Therefore in the next few issues I am going to devote some space to various games that have stood the test of time well, so much so that they are still played today. Watch this space.

● I like role playing games but get so confused with all the jargon it makes my head spin. I mean there is GM, FRP, PBM, D+D, AD+D, COH and HTK to name but a few. Can you get help please?
Peter Watcher,
Newcastle.

Wayne says: Right, Peter are you ready for this? GM = Games Master. FRP + Fantasy Role Playing. PBM = Play By Mail. D + D = Dungeons and Dragons. AD + D = Advanced Dungeons And Dragons. COC = Call Of Cthulhu and HTK = Hits To Kill. Any the wiser? Nope, I thought not, but don't fret, look out Wayne's Glossary of FRP terms that will be in the magazine.

● I have been involved with FRP for many years, but a lot of games are pre-released in America and by the time they come over here they are old hat? Can you let me know where I can get American imported games on a reliable basis?"
Harry Pether,
Cardiff.

Wayne says: Yes, Harry. Look no further than Games Of Liverpool, 89 Victoria St, Liverpool LG1 6OG. They are one of the biggest importers of brand new American FRP games and are very reliable. Send them a large SSAE and you will get their well stocked catalogue. Know what I mean, Harry?

● I've been LRP (Live Role-Playing!) quite a few times now and am an avid fan. However, I would like to own my own customised rubber sword. I have tried to make one without success and I cannot look up a rubber sword maker in the yellow pages. Help me please I'm desperate!
David Hay,
Middlesbrough.

Wayne says: Don't despair, David, help, is at hand. Over the years there have been one or two dodgy rubber sword makers that have run off with players money, but I know that Pete Garner at *The Labyrinthe* has full details on the elusive rubber sword makers. Drop him a line with a SSAE at the address given in this magazine and he will point you in the right direction.

Wayne's PLAY BY MAIL.

MIDGARD FOR MITRE

Mitregames have secured the rights to run *Midgard*, a tremendous game that I am playtesting at the moment. The deal means that Mitre are the only people in the world who can run the game. They have already had a large unflux of American players, who have taken to the game like ducks to water. Apparently, nearly 90 per cent of the US players were so shocked to find that their special actions received an answer from the British G.Ms, that they wrote to them thanking them for the chance to role play!

My review *Midgard* will be published within the next couple of months, when I have a few more rounds under my belt. But I can say Mitre's reputation for running high quality PBMs is reflected in this product.

Basically, it is best described as a computerized wargame with limited role-playing options.

Mitre have also obtained the world rights to *Tribes Of Crane*, another American game that has been growing steadily over the past year.

To celebrate Mitre's acquisition of *Midgard*, they have kindly given the following prizes to *C+VG*.

- 10 start up sets of *Midgard*.
- 10 boxed start up sets of *Tribes Of Crane*.
- 10 start up sets in their 22 century nuclear wargame *Global Supremacy*.
- 20 full colour 3ft by 2ft posters for *Starmaster* and *Tribes of Crane*.

As a start up box in *Crane* costs nearly £10.00, start up in *Midgard* is £5.00, start up in *Global* costs £5.00 and the posters retail at £2.00 – this is unrivaled opportunity to get into PBM.

To get your grubby little PBM digits on these tremendous items all you have to do is write and tell me your name, age, address as well as answer the following.

What is the best and worst PBM you have sampled and the reasons behind your choice?

Readers from abroad need not worry. I will be reserving a number of prizes exclusively for them.

GMs WANTED

Mitre are on the look out for new GMs. The requirements are a couple of O levels in English and Maths, plus good handwriting. Experience with any computer would be an advantage. The wages are not on par with the royalty, but the job satisfaction is greater.



After the tremendous success of the Third British P.B.M. convention, the P.B.M. cauldron has reached boiling point, with new games emerging daily. There are a lot of new players out there, eagerly licking their lips and waiting to test them, but will they get their wallets burned in the process. Read on to find out what's what and who's in the steamy world of P.B.M.

C+VG 'CRIMERS' REACH 400

K.J.C. are running the *C+VG* game of *It's A Crime* game 14, in which more than 400 *C+VG* readers are involved and all trying to win the big selection of Prizes K.J.C. have put up on offer. One third of all the correspondence I receive is about I.A.C. in one context or another.

If it is not people writing in wanting their gang's mentioned, if others wanting hints tips and advice. So for all you 'Crimers' out there here is the latest update.

The curse of Wayne has struck again. Once again we have new leaders. *The Hedgehog Hitmen* are the 'numero uno' game witha notority of 846, but they are closely followed by *The Meathead Brigade*, who are in second place with a score of 825.

Other notables are *The Bob Hat Boot Boys* who have moved up to fifth place with a score of 795, *Steel City Giants*, who have held their mid table place with a score of 694 and the *Lunatic Riot Front*, who have dropped so far down the table with a score of 561.

SPIRAL ARM II OFFER

Spellbinder Games, leaders of *Play Before You Pay* have kindly made more generous offers to *C+VG* readers.

Spiral Arm, that very popular computer-moderated sci-fi game, has been updated, upgraded and revamped, to make it even more interesting. The new version of the game is called *Spiral Arm II* and has a brand new rulebook which is a great improvement on the old one.

Spellbinder's second new game is called *Worlds In Conflict*, a very complex and involved game indeed. The basis of the game is that in 2150 AD aliens arrived en mass from another galaxy and gave Earth a blunt and brutal message: Surrender certain parts of the world or face invasion and defeat.

This game is not recommended for the novice P.B.M.er as it is quite complex and hard.

Spellbinder titles *Spiral Arm* and *Keys of Bledare* still on offer.

You can obtain a free set up, rule book and three free turns in *Spiral Arm*, *Spiral Arm II* and *Keys of Bled* if you send a S.S.A.E. to me at *C+VG*.

If you fancy a go at *Worlds in Conflict*, then a start up will cost you £5.00, but you will be credited with five free turns worth £7.50. As you can work out, further turns cost a mere £1.50 per turn. All cheques and P/O's made payable to Spellbinder Games please.

I have also a few playtesting positions in all of Spellbinder's games to allocate to a few people. All you have to do to obtain one is send me your definition of the word Spellbinder.

SEARCH FOR 'THE WEAPON'

Harrow Postal Games has two new games for the advanced pizmer.

The first is called *The Weapon* a very, very complex game indeed. It is totally computer-moderated and is sci-fi based.

Apparently, the scientists on your world have made two monumental technical advaces. The first one is hyperspace travel, which allows your space ships to travel vast distances into unexplored space and the second is The Weapon, a machine of such power that it can destroy anything in its way.

However, the materials required to build The Weapon are very scarce on your planet, so you must begin a journey of interseller exploration to help you reach your ultimate aim: domination of the universe.

The second game is called *The Omega Victory*, which once again is a computer moderated game of inter-galactic warfare, where you play the leader of a world that has found involved in the Omega wars.

Harrow have kindly offered *C+VG* readers the following:

- *The Weapon* rule book at £1.00, instead of £1.50.
- Set Up in *The Weapon* at £4.00 instead of £5.00.
- £1.00 off your first five turns in *The Weapon*, so you pay £1.00 instead of £2.00.
- Set Up in *Omega Victory* at £2.50.
- All further turns in *Omega Victory* at the ridiculous price of 50p with no hidden extras.

Please make all cheques payable to Harrow Postal games".

WORLDS OF CHAOS REVAMPED

G.A.D. Games have given their game *Worlds of Chaos* a facelift, which has changed the original concept dramatically.

It can now be played as easily by a new player or an experienced one, but it will appeal to the latter.

There are a limited amount of places available for players, as he wishes to keep up his swift turn around and high quality. It is for these reasons that he is giving an offer, just quoting his normal price, which is a starter pack for £6.00, which includes rulebook, character generation, set up and three free rounds with paid postage. Further turns are a cheap £1.20. All cheques made payable to GAD Games please.

WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS

IK+

Call it a sequel...
And you'll land up flat on your back.
They called International Karate 'the greatest Karate beat 'em up yet' (Commodore User).
And who are we to argue?
But ARCHER MACLEAN has come up with a stunner: A third fighter. An amazing animated background. New moves (including double head-kick and a spectacular backflip). Re-mixed music by ROB HUBBARD. And balls!

RAMPAGE

The game where the nice guys don't get a look in.
Grab your way through Chicago, punch up New York, and jump on San Francisco.
Three indescribably nasty characters which bear a remarkable likeness to King Kong, Godzilla and Wolf-man, need you to send them on a rampage in an enduring 150 days of destruction, through 50 different cities.



BARBARIAN

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BATTLING BEL

Channel 4 is currently screening the first British television series devoted to the strange Japanese sport of Sumo wrestling. It makes fascinating, almost hypnotic viewing. C+VG Deputy Editor Paul Boughton investigates this bizarre spectacle.

Sumo, the ancient art of Japanese wrestling, remains a mystery to most Western eyes. The clash of two near-naked giant men, grotesquely fat but immensely strong, is bewildering to the uninitiated.

Picture the scene. Two mountains of blubber, wearing an odd nappy-like belts, meet in a small, cement-hard ring. Four minutes are spent in a strange and confusing ritual of stamping, squatting, puffing, snorting, fierce glares and throwing salt into the air.
each other, adopting an almost American Football-style stance. Suddenly, and with surprising speed for such huge men, they crash into each other. The smack of flesh hitting flesh is painful to hear. A frantic tussle ensues, ending when one of the wrestlers is pushed out of the ring. The fight may last just a few seconds.

And yet it drives the Japanese wild. The wrestlers are heroes, admired, almost worshipped, held up as role-models for the young.

There is so much more to Sumo than first meets the eye. It is the oldest of all martial arts with rules and traditions dating back at least 2,000 years and rituals rooted in the ancient religion of Shinto.

In other words, Sumo is sacred.

And in a world where sport is so often marred by senseless crowd violence, obscenity and loutish behaviour of star players, Sumo sets an example and standard which other sports and sportsmen could well follow.

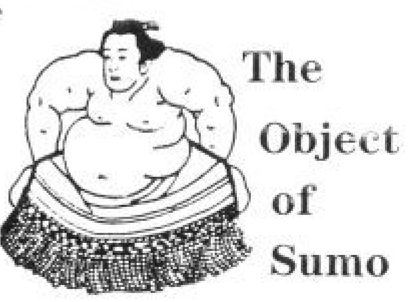
There are few sports more intensely competitive than Sumo, yet the wrestlers conduct themselves with great dignity. Winning is accepted with courtesy, losses met with good grace. They never argue with the referee.

It is often said that non-Japanese spectators quickly become hooked on Sumo and become some of its most avid supporters. After seeing just one episode of Channel 4's new series, I became a fan. And if you manage to see any of the programmes - Tuesdays at 11.35pm - I think you will as well.

Perhaps so much attention is being focussed on Sumo at the moment is because a foreigner is poised to join the highest rank in the sport of Yokozuna, Grand Champion. Since Sumo was organised into a professional sport around 300 years ago, there have only ever been 62 Yokozuna.

The foreign sensation is Hawaiian Salvaa Fuauli Atisonne who fights under the name of Konishiki. At 24 years of age, he weighs in at more than 36 stone. Only one word can describe this man - awesome.

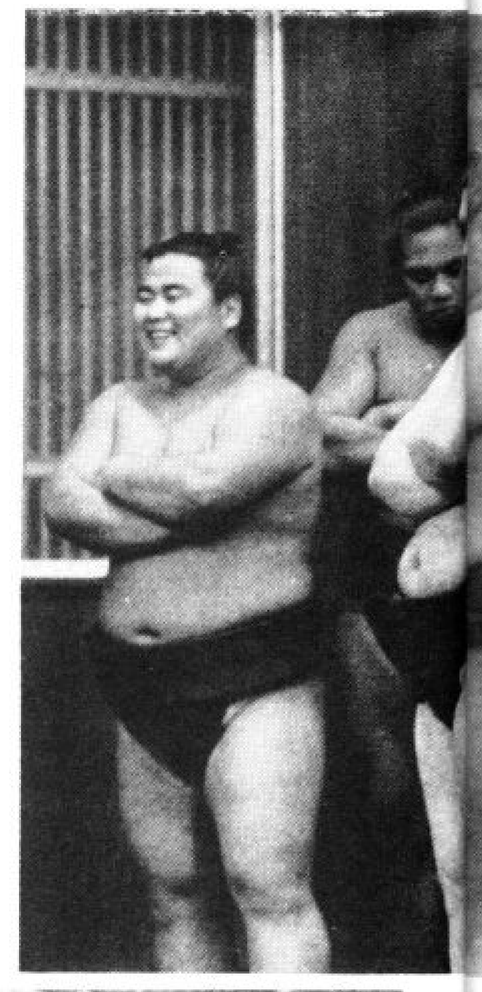
It's hard to know where to begin a brief description into the history, rituals, techniques and life-style of Sumo. It's like peeling an onion, remove one layer and there's another underneath. What follows just skims the surface.



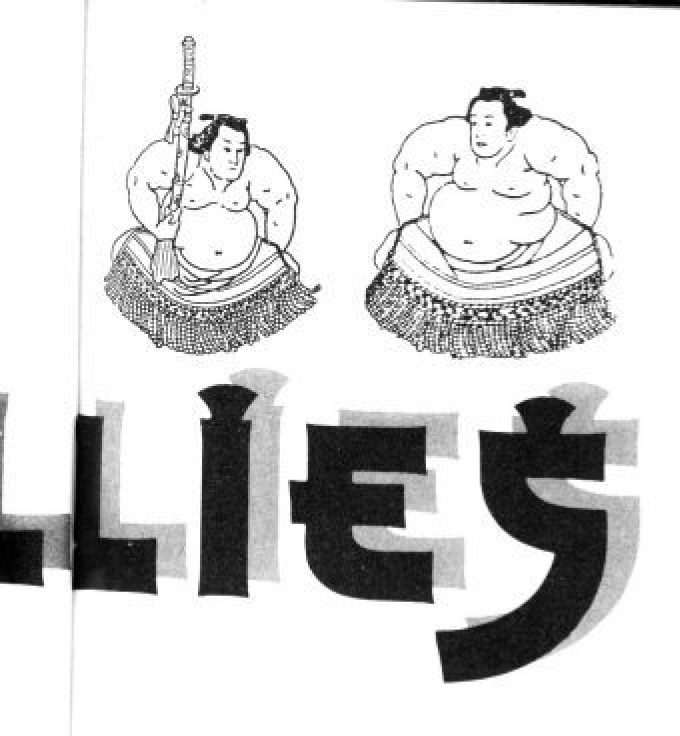
The Object of Sumo

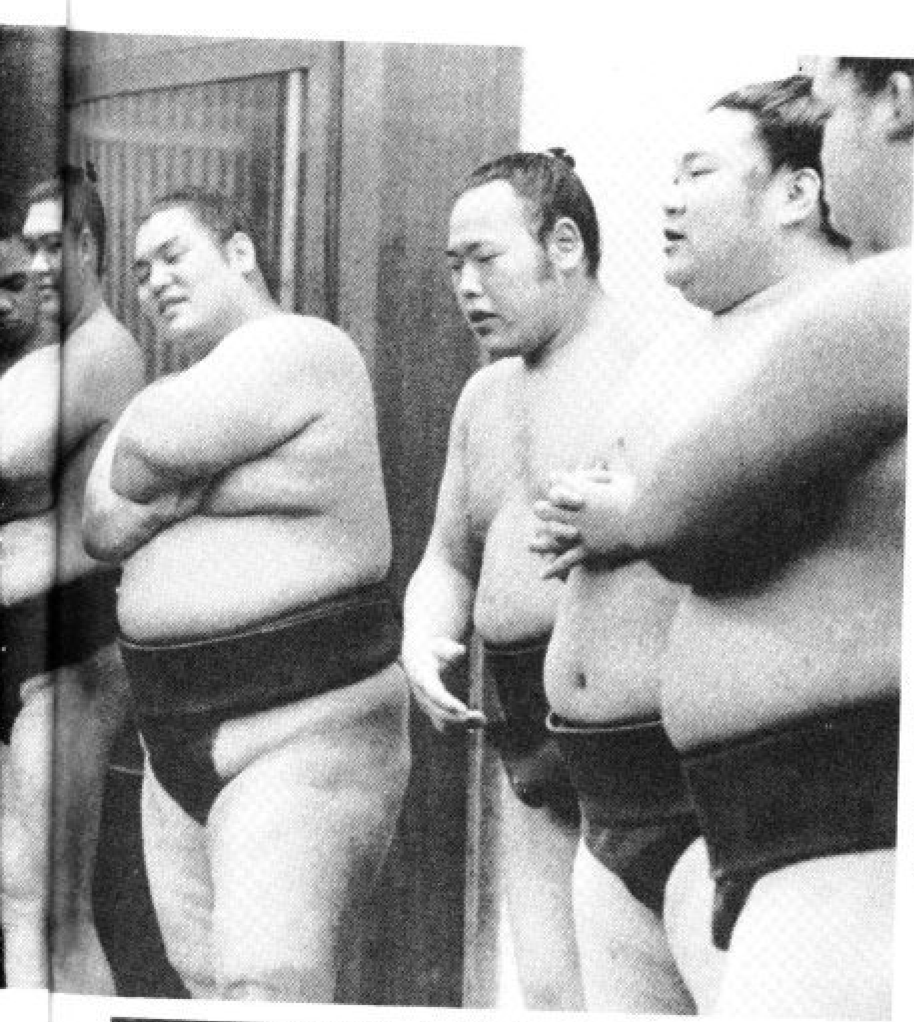
The aim of a Sumo match is quite simple. It is for one wrestler to force the other out of the ring or dohyo or make him touch the floor with any part of his body other than the soles of his feet.

The dohyo is a 17ft 9ins square mound of specially











packed clay sprinkled with sand. The borders of the square defined by 28 bales made of straw – filled bags sunk into the earth. Another 20 bales are sunk in the centre to form a circle with a diameter of 14ft 9ins. In the centre of this circle are two 3ft white lines which are 4ft apart. These lines are where the wrestlers face up to each other.

There are 70 winning techniques listed by the sport's governing body, the Japanese Sumo Association. Basically these are throws, trips, lifts, thrusts, shoves and pulls. Of these moves, 48 are classed as "classic" techniques. The wrestlers are banned from kicking, or punching with a closed fist. However slaps are allowed. Most wrestlers perfect between six and eight techniques for their fighting repetoire.

The four easiest winning techniques to spot are as follows:

Oshidashi – this is where one wrestler is pushed out of the ring with hands applied to the front of his body.

Yorikiri – forcing the opponent out of the ring with one or both hands below his arms or behind him.

Uwatenage – grabbing the belt and then throwing the opponent down while his arm is pinned under the other wrestlers.

Tsuridashi – grabbing the opponent's belt, lifting and carrying him out of the ring.



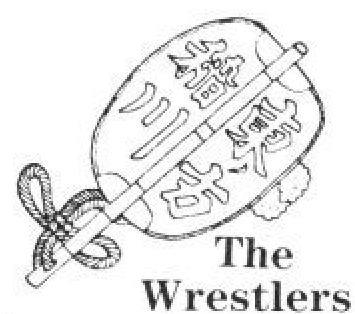
The Belt

The belt or belly band the wrestlers wear is called a mawashi, it looks extraordinarily uncomfortable and it barely keeps the wrestlers decent.

Depending on the wrestler's size, the belt is between 33 and 43 feet long and 32 inches wide. It is folded over six times to a width of five inches and looped under the groin and around the body at least five times and knotted at the rear. During tournaments the top wrestlers wear belts which can cost thousands of pounds.

They also wear a string apron called a sagari at tournaments. The strings are made up of starched silk. To have a good one made will cost the wrestlers a small fortune.





The Wrestlers

To make it a a top Sumo wrestler you have to be a big lad. In the past new recruits to Sumo were as young as 13. Now the age is around 15 with a minimum height qualification of 5ft 8ins. Most wrestlers are about 6ft with an average weight of 300 lbs. But there have been successful wrestlers who weigh as little as 240 lbs.

Most wrestlers have finished their careers by time they reach their mid-thirties.

The 700 or so professional Sumo wrestlers are divided into ranks, ranging from beginner to grand champion. Depending on success, the wrestlers move up and down in ranking.

Only the top two ranks of

continued on page 100 ►



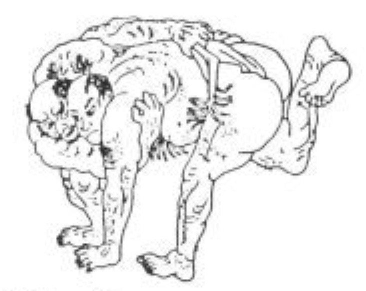
wrestlers receive salaries. And once they make it to the top, big name Sumo stars also make extra money from sponsorship deals.

The wrestlers are trained in the art of Sumo, its traditions, rules and etiquettes by what is know as the stable system. There are around 30 active stables and a professinal wrestler will make it his home throughout his career.

A stable is under the control of a one man, always an ex-wrestler. His rule is absolute. The only wrestlers who live outside the stables are those who are married and they are a rarity.

Upstairs are dormitories for junior wrestlers, the seniors live in semi-private rooms. Downstairs is the unheated training room.

The only women to live in the stable are the manager's wives. All housekeeping chores are carried out by the unranked and unpaid wrestlers. They must also act as servants to the top stars.



The Tournaments

The popularity of Sumo has steadily increased over the past few decades. There are now six big tournaments held every other month in Japan's four largest cities – January (Tokyo), March (Osaka), May (Tokyo), July (Nagoya), September (Tokyo), November (Fukuoka).

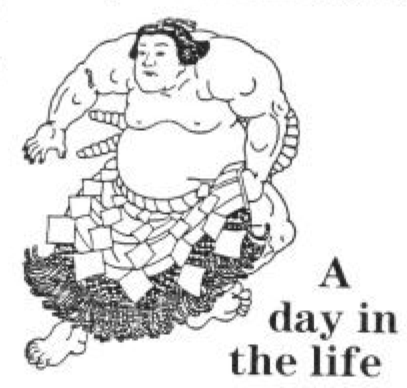
Each tournament starts on a Sunday and closes on a Sunday and lasts for up to 15 days.

Competition starts at 10 in the morning with the apprentice wrestlers fighting for qualifying places. At 11, it's the turn of the four lower divisions of wrestlers. They will wrestle on alternate days for seven days in the hope of improving their ranking.

The top two divisions of Sumo wrestlers fight once a day for 15 days. Each of their bouts will probably last just five minutes, the majority of which will be taken up with ritual. A good fight will last around 30 seconds.

Competition finishes at about 6 pm each day except for the last day when the prizes are given out.

As Wembley is the home of English soccer, the Kokugikan (National Sports Arena) in Tokyo is the spiritual home of Sumo. It is a big amphitheatre capable of seating 10,000 people. Besides the baths, changing room and clinic for the wrestlers, there is a Sumo museum and school where all new wrestlers must attend a six month course. It is also the headquarters of the Japan Sumo Association.



A day in the life

The wrestlers practice – called Keiko – everyday. Again it is ritualised and very gruelling. A typical day would be as follows.

4.00 or 5.00 am. The lowest ranked wrestlers are up and ready for practice. The higher ranked wrestlers are allowed to lie in bed for a little longer. That means rising from 6.30 onwards. The top men will be limbering up shortly after 8.00 am.

The practice, which revolves around a few basic exercises, is designed to improve and enhance what are regarded as the essential qualities of a Sumo wrestler – balance, agility, flexibility, powerful thighs and a low centre of gravity.

The basic exercises are again rooted in ancient tradition.

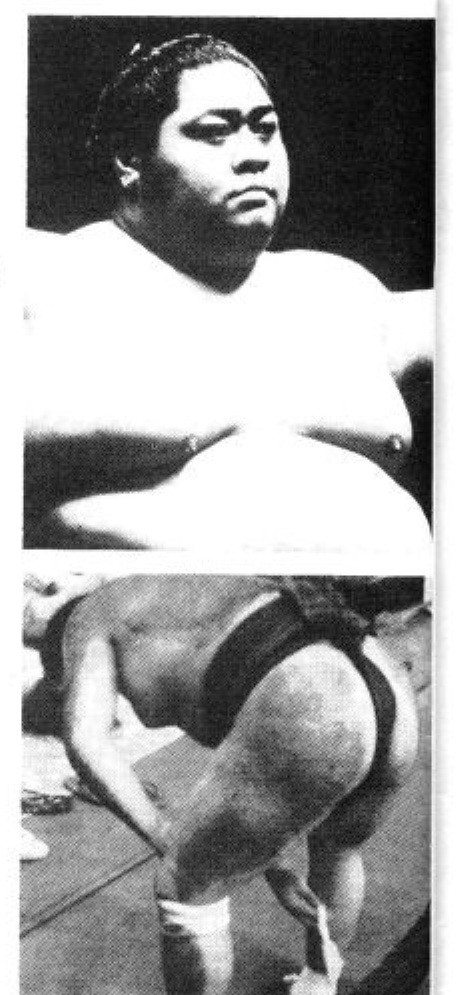
First there's shiko. The wrestlers stand with their legs wide apart and breathe in. They lean to the left and raise the right leg as high as possible. Next they stamp the right foot down and at the same time breathe out. This is repeated with the left foot. Now that sounds quite easy, doesn't it? Easy, that is, until you realise beginners repeat this exercise at least 500 times a day.

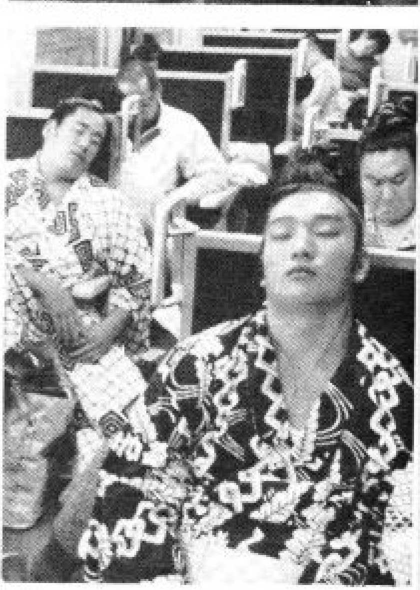
Things get more painful with the next exercise, matawari. This involves sitting in dirt with legs spread to 180 degrees. The wrestler leans forward until the entire front of his body is pressed into the earth. Now, if the Sumo beginner can't manage that, there's no need to worry. A senior wrestler will stand on his back to help things along. "Are you crying?" he asks the beginner as tradition dictates. The equally traditional reply is not "AAAAAAAARGH!!!!!", as you might expect, but "No, just sweat in my eyes."

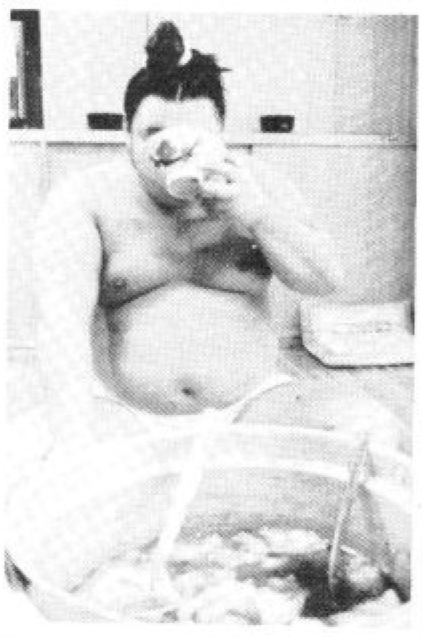
And after all this, it's still only around 11 am. The senior wrestlers head for the baths.

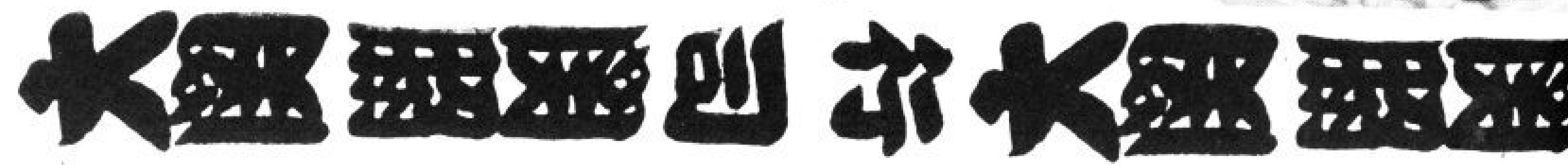
Then it's time for the first and largest meal of the day, a high calorie stew made up of a seaweed-based stock, chicken, pork, fish, bean-sprouts, cabbage, carrots, onions and lots more. They devour bowl after bowl of this plus rice and wash the lot down with quarts of beer. At around 1 pm the lower ranked wrestlers get to eat.

That is the end of the day's training. Those wrestlers who can afford it, go out for supper.

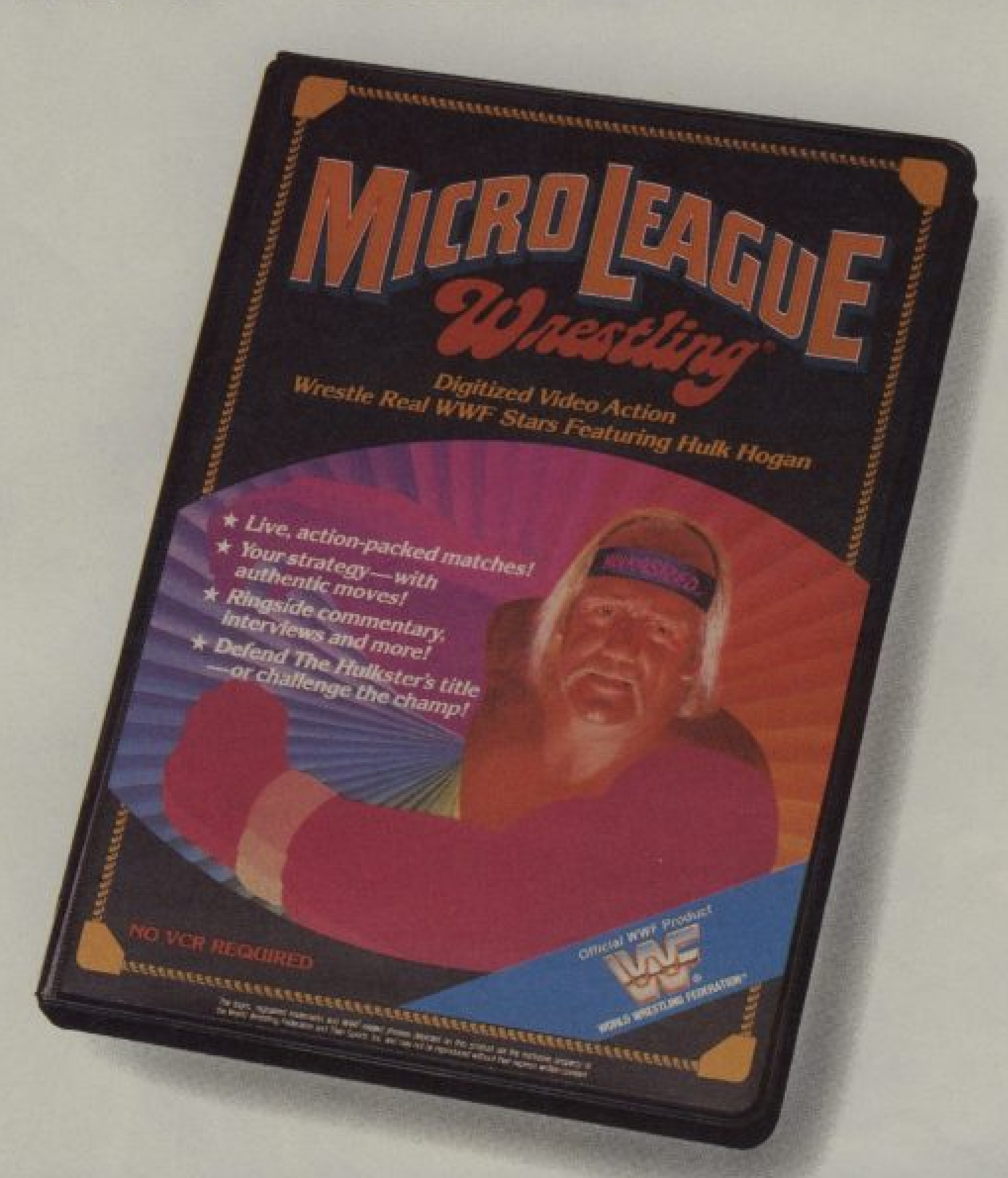








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The Big Screen

Steven Spielberg delivers his Shanghai surprise, but our man *Ward R Street says,* I want Someone to Watch Over Me,'' as he watches over this month's cinema releases.

▼ *Empire of the Sun.*

Steven Spielberg is a 'wannabe'! When he made *Jaws* he wannabe Hitchcock. With the *Indianna Jones* films he wannabe a 1940s serials director. In *ET* he wannabe Walt Disney and more recently *The Colour Purple* demonstrated just how much he wannabe seen as a serious artist. He's after that elusive Oscar again with **Empire of the Sun** (PG) – he wannabe Dickie *(Ghandi)* Attenborough and David *(Lawrence of Arabia)* Lean rolled into one!

Empire is a big film – a flagship for the Spielberg empire, no less. It's based on J.G. Ballard's Booker Prize short-listed novel, and adapted by a respected playwright, Tom Stoppard. In short, it's just the sort of movie that gets picked for the annual Royal Film Performance.

Its story fully deserves the epic treatment. Set in China during World War Two, it starts with the invasion of Shanghai, following its hero from his evasion of the Japanese forces, through his capture and internment with other British and American civilians in a stark concentration camp and on a brutal forced-march across the desert, right up to 1945 and freedom.

There's a twist to all this though, because the hero, Jim, is only 11-years-old – an English school who's been separated from his parents, and who gradually becomes more wild as the war progresses. We see events through his eyes, but we also realise that the rigours of daily life are cutting deep emotional scars.

These great events are presented on a grand scale, but on the more intimate level the film is less convincing. It's not the acting that's at fault. Christian Bale is superb as Jim, battling against the odds every day. John Malkovich is also brilliant as the amoral American black-marketeer, Basie. But individuals seem to vanish as their faces blur into yet one more crowd scene. All I could think of was the millions spent in Spielberg's quest for glory.

The film tries too hard to obtain a mythical aura, unlike John Boorman's recent *Hope and Glory,* which was a truly magical evocation of one boy's war, made for a fraction of the cost. The script is too literary, battering you over the head until you feel that *Empire of the Stun* might have been a better title. I swear the film lasts slightly longer than the real war in the East. Sometimes more is actually less, Steven.

For lovers of big-bucks epics – and royals – only.

The real thrills are to be found in a more modest movie. Last month we had policeman Richard Dreyfuss falling head over heels in love with the woman he had under surveillance. Now, whadya know, Detective Tom Berenger is doing the same thing. What is it with these cops?



▲ *Stakeout.*

Stakeout played it for laughs, but this time it's serious – deadly serious! Wealthy heiress Claire Gregory (Mimi Rogers) witnesses a murder in an elegant nightclub. She's the only person who can identify th psychotic killer, which is why she needs **Someone to Watch Over Me** (15) if she's to survive until the police bring him to trial.

Detective Mike Keegan would far rather be at home with his wife and kid instead of creeping round a chic Manhattan kitchen in search of a midnight snack. From the start he's all at sea socially, as he stakes out Claire's marble and mirrors hallway, or accompanies her to a posh party.

But it isn't long before he's emotionally swamped as well – sinking deeply into live with her. His marriage is put at risk and worse, so are his and Claire's lives. There's still a psycho out there and he's none too discriminating about who he makes his victims. Keegan's private and professional lives become inextricably intertwined as the story races to an ultra-tense climax.

Hitchcock-style suspense accompanies the pain and problems of Keegan's infatuation in this classy romantic thriller. Director Ridley Scott matches the glossy visual style of *Blade Runner* with the seat-edge tension of his other great hit, *Alien.* Watch over this one when it comes your way.

Imagine a fantasy-adventure story, stacked with the sort of exploits whic made Errol Flynn one of the finest swordsman ever to swash a buckle. Imagine a fantasy land filled with giants and devilish, dwarvish villains, surrounded by seas made treacherous by pirates. Now get somebody with Fergus McNeil's sense of irreverent fun to re-work this fairy tale

continued on page 106

The Big Screen

. . . and you have **The Princess Bride** (PG).

It's not Fergus telling the story though, but a grandfather talking to his grandson, who's stuck in bed with a cold – and who makes it quite clear that while he doesn't mind the fights, he's none too keen on the soppy stuff! So grandad sticks to the story of how, once Princess Buttercup has been captured by three wicked kidnappers on the eve of her wedding to Prince Humperdink, a mysterious stranger comes to her rescue.

▼ Princes Bride.

The tale twists like a sea serpent as nothing turns out to be what it seems. Baddies become goodies, goodies are really baddies . . . and the mysterious swordsman's mask just happens to hide a face from Buttercup's past. Of course it all ends happily and true love wins through – so much so that the boy is willing to witness one last kiss.

This may all sound fairly yucky, and so it would be if not for the knowing edge that writer William Goldman and director Rob Reiner, who made *Spinal Tap* and *Stand By Me*, lend to the nonsensical proceedings. They're helped by a cast which includes a whole host of stars in unusual roles. Billy Crystal from Soap appears as an ancient Jewish wizard; a heavily made-up Peter Falk is the grandfather; and our own Mel Smith even crops up as a camp torturer.

Princess Bride is an affectionate send-up of romantic tales of daring-do.

Reality is even thinner in **Asterix in Britain** (U) – paper thin, in fact, because this is the latest chapter in the animated adventures of the cartoon Gaul. But even though I normally find these radical re-tellings of Roman history highly resistible, this time I was in hysterics.

It's always interesting to find out how the rest of the world sees you. On this showing we Brits have a reputation for endless tea drinking and knocking off work at five on the dot for a game of cricket. Unfair – I don't pick up my bat until five fifteen at the earliest!

This gives Caesar's legions every opportunity to walk all over us until just one little village remains. Everything looks bleak till one of its inhabitants remembers a cousin across the Channel and sends out a call for help. Guess who answers, complete with magic portion, to help the resistance?

But before Asterix and Obelix can do their stuff they have to cope with every peril imaginable, including pirates and, even worse, warm English ale! It's a bright and breezy romp which won't twist your intellect too much, but which pokes fun at everyone except the heroic Gauls.

▼ Asterix.

You can't take it so easy with **Orphans** (15) though. It's based on a bizzare American play about two brothers who live alone in a decrepit house. Treat is the street-wise would-be-thug who steals to keep his simple brother Philip well-stocked with his favourite food, tuna.

But for all his apparent care, Treat has tricked Philip into isolation by telling him that he suffers from a potentially fatal allergy to fresh air. So they lead their private life of manic fantasy until into their enclosed world comes Harold, a business-man who Treat has kidnapped and plans to hold to ransom.

▲ Orphans.

What Treat isn't wise enough to realise is the nature of Harold's business. He's an ageing gangster on the run from the mob. It doesn't take him long to escape, but a sentimental streak leads him to adopt these dead-end kids. He starts to turn Treat into a sharply dressed bodyguard, while he gives Philip the affection and self-respect which eventually tear the trio apart.

This is the month's most difficult film, but it's never heavy – at least once you're used to its somewhat stagey atmosphere. In fact it's often very funny, thanks to the performances of Birdy and *Full Metal Jacket's* Matthew Modine, newcomer Kevin Anderson, and above all Albert Finney, simply superb as the nostalgic mobster. **Orphans** is sure to find a home with anybody into experimental drama.

FAST FORWARD

It's time to load up the video again, as *Ward* recommends the month's top releases for sale and hire.

Video provides a great chance to see a number of movies that never make it to your local cinema. *Amazon Women on the Moon* (TBA) is one of them, and despite the tacky title, it's actually an hilarious Mad-style satire on late-night American TV.

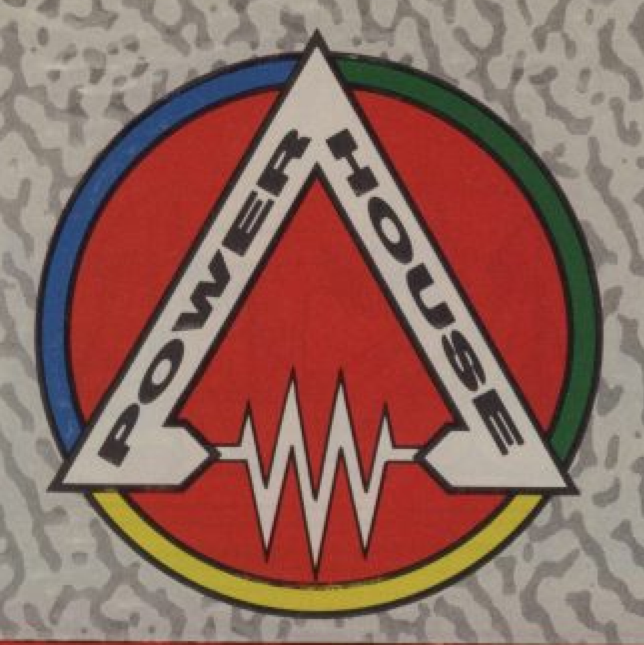
Surf Nazis (18) is another tongue in cheek epic from Troma, purveyors of trash to afficianados. Originally called *Surf Nazis Must Die* this tells a tale of beach warfare, complete with a vigilante granny.

Recent additions to the rental circuit that I raved about are *Made in Heaven* (PG) and *Near Dark* (18). The former's truly delightful romantic comedy about reincarnation while the latter's a tale of vampires which is totally terrifying.

I wasn't so keen on *La Bamba* (15) but a lot of people liked this old-fashioned bio-pic of 50s singer Richer Valens. Meanwhile the new James Bond gets a first video outing in *The Living Daylights* (PG) – slightly overlong but great fun.

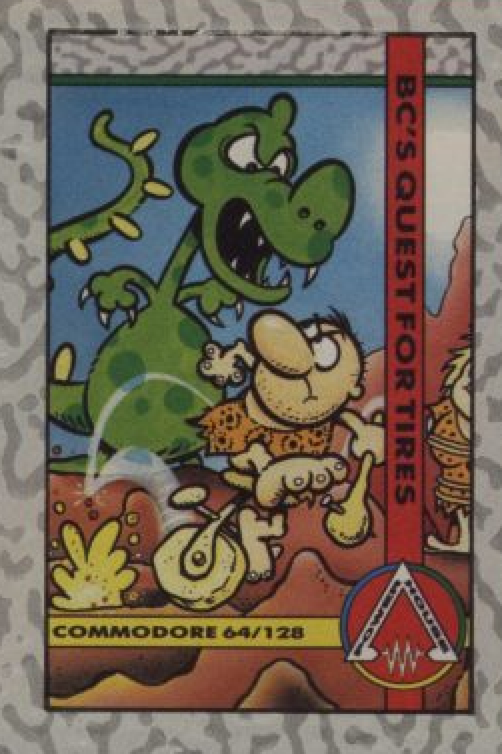
Strange is the word for the surreal clowning of *Pee-Wee's Big Adventure* (U), which I hated but you may love. But the big, BIG video news is that *ET* will be officially available this autumn.

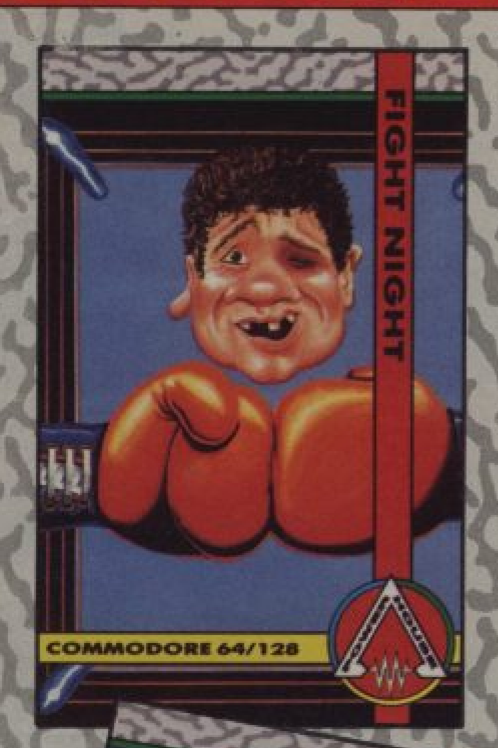
Meantime Fandersons with several £7.99's burning holes in their pockets will be relieved to here that sell-through label Channel 5 now has volume 8 of *Thunderbirds* (U) containing 97 mins of International Rescue, volume 6 of *Captain Scarlet* (U), four more *Stingray* (U) stories, and finally live-action *UFO* (U) volume 3.



THE POWER HOUSE





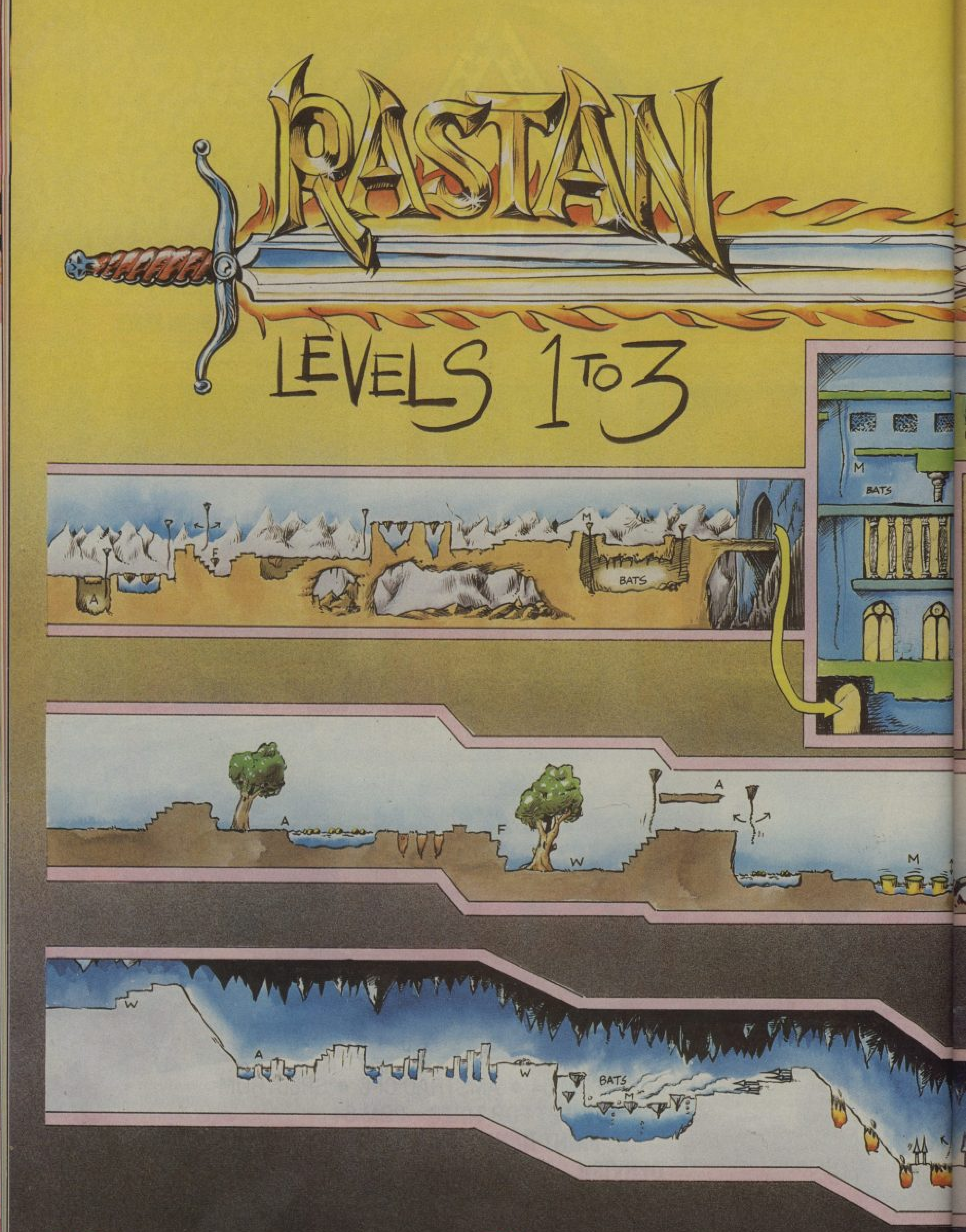




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Playmasters Map



Sprawling across this page is a stunning map of the first three levels of ace coin-op conversion. Rastan, a game so big we couldn't fit it all on! What this means is that you get a month to get a grip on the first half, and next month you can take my hand and we'll go through the tough second half together. Sound all right? *(Massed chorus of "No". Ed.)* I knew you'd see it my way.

Key

M-mace S-start

A-ace F-firewood

-rope

-swinging-rope

WI

WI

WI

A

SE

BATS

A

BATS

Next Month

Alien Syndrome turned gamers' stomachs when it hit the arcades last year with some of the nastiest aliens ever dreamt of.

They were so gross the cabinet could have carried an 'X' certificate and no one would have complained. Slimy hulks like the 'Huggers' with their skull heads placed on top of slimy bodies of gunge. The Asophies have gaping mouths, the Tacapies just look like a mass of eyes – yuk.

But there is more to *Alien Syndrome* than ugly Garry Williams-like aliens. There is a helluva games challenge in there as well – enough to make *Syndrome* a cult coin-op hit – one of the very best, a games player's game. C + VG will exclusively review the Commodore 64 and Spectrum versions next month – with a preview of the ST thrown in for good measure.

Winner Stays On. The letters are pouring in now. One gamer claims to be the 'king of Surrey', another to have 'clocked Glasgow'. Read the first report of the play-offs in next month's issue.

Playmasters. New boy Matt Bielby is mapping like crazy. Check us next month for the hints column that is quickly becoming the best in the biz.

Compos: If you thought this month's were hot – you ain't seen nothing yet.

Freebies Are Back: A mystery free gift will be attached to next month's front cover. You will know that when C + VG has a gift on the front it sells quicker than iced lager in the Gobi desert. So be there with £1.10 in your hand – or miss the best value in computer games magazines in the known universe.

On Sale April 15th

Dear Mr Newsagent, Avoid a visit from Shuck and Doode and reserve me a copy of Computer + Video Games, May issue!

Name____________________

Address____________________

____

• Hurtle into the future with May's C + VG out on April 15th. It's hotter than hell . . . in a cool sort of way.

Winner Stays On

Hi, do you know me? Well actually the answer is no, you don't, not yet anyway – but I'm afraid you're going to have to in the months to come. My name's Matt, and I'm the new kid on the block here at C+VG. If you're in the habit of reading every piece of small print in the mag – and let's face it who doesn't? – You might just have seen my name pop in there under "Staff Writer" last ish, even though I hardly did a stroke of work on it *(What's changed? Ed.)* Well right here, right now is where I start earning my keep, and it's nice to be able to kick off on a high note, with the intro to a great new competition to find the best games player in the land. Trigger fingers ichy? I thought so. Let's get blasting . . .

We're looking for the best all-round Games player in the country, and it could be you!

So you think you're pretty hot stuff with that joystick, huh? You guess you could rack up a high score on just about any game, any system. You figure half an hour up against you in the C+VG games room would have our Ed sweating and steaming and begging for mercy.

You're pretty lippy really,



aren't you, kid? Well, this is where C+VG gives you the chance to put your trigger-finger where your mouth is, in the C+VG *Winner Stays On Challenge.*

THE CHALLENGE

The set up is this. On Saturday April 23, C+VG will bring together the top ten players and the latest games, lock them all in a room together and get them to fight it out. The winner at the end of the day becomes the C+VG champion for that month.

But it doesn't end there. The month after that he will have to defend his hard won position as king of the gaming castle against the three meanest challengers.

THE GAMES

To cut the grade with the best of them, you're going to need a pretty wide range of skills. Each challenger will be playing his rivals on five different types of game, selected on the spot by the C+VG team, on all different systems. You will only have a few minutes on each game to prove yourself, so it's going to be a real survival of the fittest!

You will play: A classic shoot-'em up, a beat-'em up, an arcade adventure, a strategy game and a racing game.

In addition there will be the Editor's challenge, where the contestents go up against our Ed at the game of his choice, so expect the un-expected!

THE PRIZES

Everyone that we bring down to London for the play-offs (expenses paid of course!) will go home with a C+VG T-shirt, and copies of every game used in the challenge (for whatever system you prefer) pressed into their sweaty little palms.

In addition the winner will get a year's subscription to C+VG, a £50 WH Smith voucher to spend on the software, books or records of his choice, and a special framed mock up of a C+VG cover featuring his moment of fame and glory. Should our champion be good enough to beat all comers three months running – and we think that's pretty unlikely! – he will not only walk off with all that lot, but an Atari ST as well!

Obviously we have no way of telling whether you've put down a true score or not, but think of this: should you get selected for the challenge, you'd better have the skill to back it up, unless you fancy setting yourself up as the laughing stock of the C+VG office, the whole gaming world besides!

Closing date for the initial challenge to find our first "Winner stays on" champion is April 14th so post your scores in now!

As you can see, old *C+VG* is starting to burst at the staples with hints and tips, maps and pokes.

Yep, we're going places, but to get there we're going to need your help! If you think you can map a hot new game – through all the levels mind! – we want to hear from you. If you've got some super hot tips the rest of us just can't live without, send them in.

Show us how you can beat the machine at its own game, and not only will you get your name in lights – or in small print anyway! – but we'll pay good money for the ones we use!



Name:...

Address:...

Age:....................

Game	System	Score
....	....	....
....	....	....
....	....	....
....	....	....



BAD CAT
"The graphics used are of a high standard, the events original and the sound is superb." ST USER
HIT!
Screen shots from Amiga version.
Is the year 1984 and Los Angeles prepares for the Olympic Summer Games. The dignitaries and celebrities prepare their speeches, and await the huge crowds expected to attend. Beware there are still the straying city-dweller cats - despised by all. The infamous cats are well known for they are planning their own competitive games. Will Bad Cat live up to his name?
PC – 24.99d
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Rainbow Arts



Enter the dragon, heralding a fire-breathing, scale-shattering, wing-waggling, fang-frightening *C+VG* competition.

Not only do we bring you this amazing map of Black Lamp, one of Firebird's best releases, but we also give you the chance to win an utterly awesome hand-painted miniature dragons. And we've got five of these little beauties to give away PLUS 10 copies of Black Lamp for the runners-up.

All you've got to do is to get your imagination into gear and create an amazing dragon. You can use paints, inks, coloured pencils or crayons. And, judging from past responses to *C+VG's* art competitions, we've cleared an extra large space for the thousands of entries. We may even use the best one as a *C+VG* pull-out poster.

Just send your entry to Black Lamp Competitionm, Computer+Video Games, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. The closing date for the competition is April 16th and the editor's decision is final.

BLACK LAMP COMPETITION

NAME.......................... AGE..........................

ADDRESS..

....

....

Tick which computer you own

Atari ST ☐ CBM 64 ☐

Spectrum ☐ Amstrad ☐

It's more than just a pretty picture showing the layout of the castles, woods and villages that make up the world of the Black Lamp game, this map also shows you where to go and what to avoid. Areas marked D on the map indicate rooms where dragons, the most dangerous monsters Jolly Jack must face on this quest may lurk, though not every dragon room contains a dragon or the valuable Black Lamp it guards.

L indicates where there are lamps to collect. There are eight primary lamp rooms on ground level, any one of which you may start at, though the nearer you begin to one of the two main towers the better off you'll be. Other lamps are kept in the towers – see floor plans – and in the network of dungeons and caverns that



exist beneath the surface.

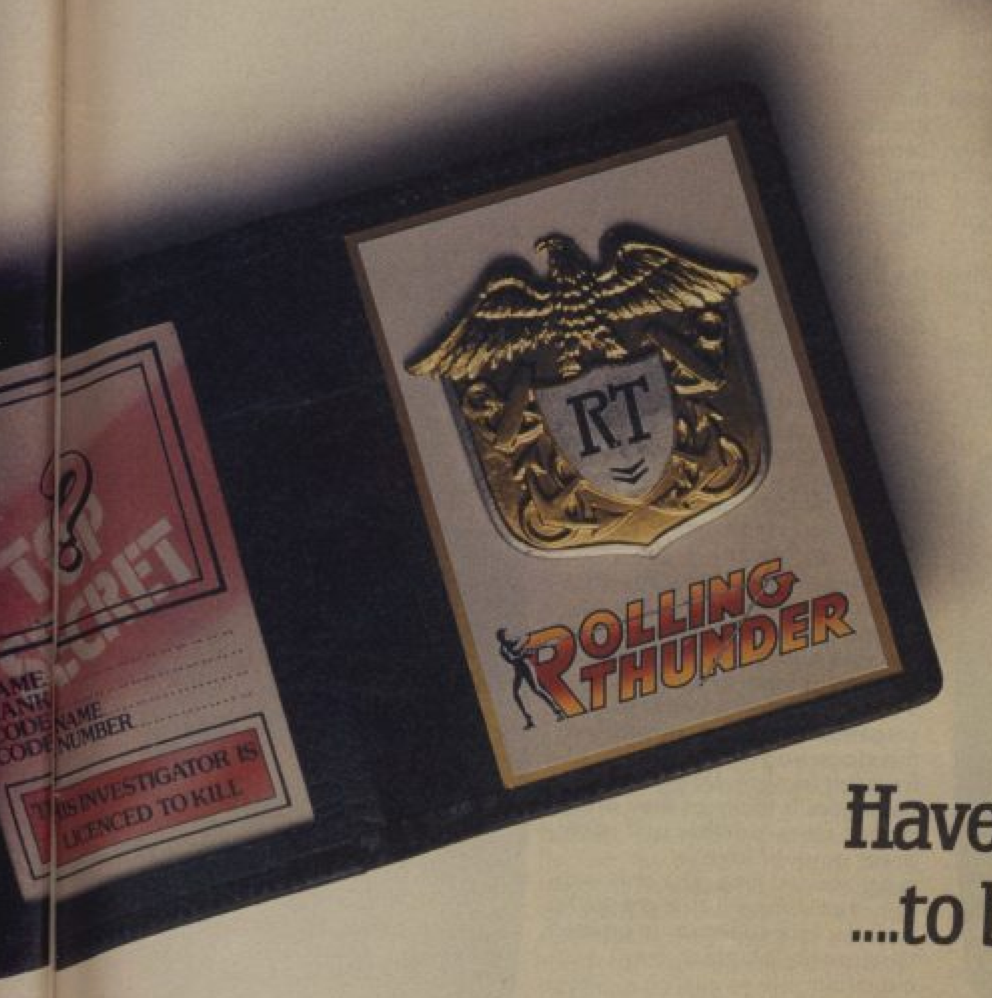
You would, in fact, be well advised to get into the tunnel system as soon as possible as it enables you to move around a whole lot faster than on the surface, and is absolutely littered with lamps. It also enables you to avoid the scrolling screens that make up much of the woods and village streets – they contain no lamps, and feature lots of dangers.

Look for more great maps every month right here in Playmasters. If there is any game you are having trouble with – and you think a map might help – why not write in and suggest it?

ROLLING THUNDER

namco




RT
ROLLING THUNDER



C + VG's Arcade Ace Clare Edgeley this month gets to grips with Mr Heli, Heavy Barrell and Twin Cobra. These are now the C + VG recommended games to spend your pennies on.



▲ *Each new stage offers fresh puzzles.*

MR HELI

Mr Heli is a gem from Irem Corporation – cute graphics, lots to shoot at and an incredible array of colourful graphics.

This addictive little game may not be much to look at initially, but wait till you start playing. It's highly addictive and great fun.

Set on a distant star in some unknown galaxy, you play Mr Heli, a small, rotund helicopter which is part of the Earth's cosmos patrol, sent to save the star from the invasion of a bunch of gloriously technicolour aliens and their support squadron of black helicopters.

That neat little storyline hardly prepares you for the wonders to come. Your first patrol takes in the star's surface – weird outcrops of rock suspended high above your head, floating islands of grass tufted soil and fluffy clouds lounging around in the sky.

Then the first attack wave appears, choppers zoom towards you, and aliens of all shapes and sizes wing in to attack. It's fairly simple at first to despatch these nasties, just a flick of the fire buttons and bullets spew from both the nose of your helicopter and straight up from a gun mounted in the whirling blades. A quick flip from right to left and the skies are momentarily clear.

But fuel and energy levels are falling, your bullets aren't enough to cope with the influx of yet more nasties and it's at this point that you discover the wonders of hidden crystals.

These blue life saving gems lie covered by a coating of rock, which, when blasted by bullets or bombs, fragments to expose the crystals in a variety of sizes. Just pick up a crystal and you'll be awarded some cash ranging from a mere $20 to $500. With the money collected you can now buy extra weapons, shields, fuel, and energy when you blow apart the rock and expose the respective symbols.

The bonuses also range in price so you must keep a watchful eye on how much you've got in the bank at any time. There's no point either in picking up everything you uncover, as certain bonuses like extra bombs may not be needed at that moment. Save your money for the items you really need.

All the time the action is getting faster, aliens hover in droves, rock formations lose their grip and float around creating additional hazards, and, worse, there's not enough time to uncover all the crystals without coming under attack. Luckily *Mr Heli* is a highly manoeuvrable little thing and can flit around at high speed.

Soon you'll come to the end of the first stage where, to get any further in the game, you must destroy a largish and very unfriendly space ship.

The next stage takes you underground to a maze of rocks and to make life more difficult, the background scrolls this time so that you have to follow it. More cunning aliens appear and you're given even less chance to pick up crystals and extras.

Now onto the next stage which is made up from a jungle of vegetation resembling an intricate background tapestry. Volcanoes loom ahead rising from the ground as well as suspended from the ceiling. On this stage you are mainly flying from left to right. Dodging the volcanoes is tricky as they are placed close together and spew great gouts of lava in synchronised time. The only way to get past them is to blast the lip until the rock collapses in on itself, temporarily plugging the mountain.

Mr Heli is full of surprises and each new stage offers a fresh supply of puzzles, brilliant graphics.



▲ *Your first mission.*

HEAVY BARRELL

All the games I've seen this month have been graced with clear large sprites, and Data East's *Heavy Barrell* is no exception.

As can be expected though, this storyline is passé with one or two foolhardy braves taking on an army unknown strength and size. However, they've decided to go for it and at least Data East has turned this game into a considerable challenge which is more than helped by the continue play facility.

Dropped in by parachute in a sufficiently stealth like manner, the two heroes immediately get out their guns and make their presence felt and heard. The noise drags the alarmed enemy to the scene and immediately chaos



▲ *Surrounded and defeated . . ?*



reigns as bullets fly and men fall in droves. Actually, *Heavy Barrell* is great fun and highly playable.

It's different too. As soon as the heroes have decimated the immediate enemy they move onto a platform which hovers just above ground level. This slowly moves back and forth, revealing large numbers of enemy troops hiding beneath it. As they are uncovered they let loose with heavy gun fire and try to clamber onto the platform. The only way to stay alive at this point, stuck as you are on the platform, is to blast the individuals as they climb aboard. Let too many onto the platform and you don't stand a fighting chance.

The platform eventually comes to a halt alowing you and your mate off onto solid ground. Lots more swarm to attack and it's a good idea to make use of the



▲ *Crossing the bridge brings you into more conflict.*

extra weapons lying around at this stage. Unlike most games there are extra weapons of all sizes and varying strengths. The best seem to be flame throwers which pulse out great gouts of fire sizzling everything they touch. This is probably why this game is so satisfying. Once you've picked up one of these weapons, the rest is easy and gives you a great feeling of power and invincibility.

The enemy all wear masks, in fact they look suspiciously like grey welding masks, though they're not much use against a flame thrower. When they get hit, they turn yellow, flicker and fall over backwards. No blood and guts in this game.

Enemy tanks zoom around and, if you blast these, other bonuses



▲ *The enemy always keep coming.*

will be awarded like shields. A quick tip. If you have a flame thrower, or some other weapon of equal power, take care not to run over a bonus weapon lying on the ground as the two will be swapped and more than likely, you'll find yourself with something inferior.

Another platform is reached but this time it's also booby trapped. As soon as it's in motion, and just when you can't get off, two huge hydraulic claws descend moving up and down to quarter the small platform. You must dodge out of the way of you don't want to be knocked cold. Firing continuously at the claws will eventually blow them up, but this takes a while and the whole escapade is fraught with danger.

As soon as you've been let off you'll run up against a wall which must be destroyed if you're to get to the next section. This is a railway sidings, with men in trucks careering round the intricate mass of track, firing at you. This level is particularly tricky, as apart from dodging bullets make sure you don't stumble into an oncoming truck and be flattened.

Huge numbers attack on this level and to make matters worse enormous stationery tanks turn their cannons on you. Dodging bullets, chucking grenades and flaming the baddies ensures the action is non-stop. If you can pick up a shield at this point, you'll be surrounded by a circle of stars which form an effective barrier to anything thrown at you. Unfortunately, neither the shields nor the extra weapons last for long, and you constantly have to keep collecting new ones up.

TWIN COBRA

Taito's *Twin Cobra* is a helicopter shoot 'em up over war torn skies and as such could be compared to *Flying Shark*. The game looks easy in the hands of experts, but believe me, you'll need bags of practice and no small level of skill to get anywhere in this fast and difficult shoot 'em up.

The main tip with games like *Twin Cobra* is to keep more of an eye on the whereabouts of enemy bullets than on your chopper. Tricky at times as you could fly bang into the enemy if you don't pay enough attention.

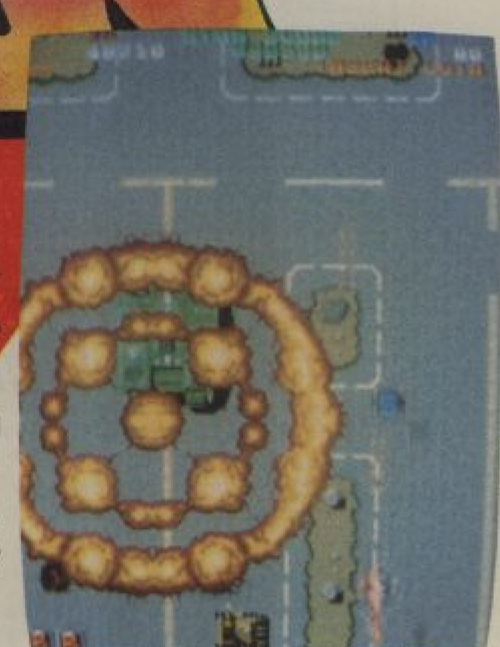
At the start of the game your chopper takes off from the flight deck of a ship, the blades whirring faster and faster for lift-off. Immediately you're zooming high above desert with clumps of scrup interspersed with enemy cannons and the like. All too soon squadrons of blue choppers slide into attack formations, tanks appear and fill the air above with anti-aircraft fire.

Soon the desert gives way to a town of sorts. Tanks patrol the roads and enemy chopper rise to halt your progress. Just keep punching the firebutton and hope you can outlast each attack long enough to pick up some extra firepower. 'B', 'S' and 'P' symbols soon appear together with whirling discs which spin through a range of colours — blue, green, red, biege and so on.

At first I didn't take much notice of these colourful discs which was nearly my undoing. However, in the midst of a particularly vicious attack I accidentally flew over the disc when it was blue and immediately sprays of blue missiles arced from the chopper's cannons, devastating everything in their path. This extra firepower is a huge bonus and the colour of the disc denotes different weapons of varying ferocity.

These extra weapons will be needed when you fly over a heavily fortified army base. Blast the hangers and more symbols appear for extra points and bombs.

The pace quickens, more enemy choppers join in to stop you reaching your refuelling barge. This offers only a brief



▲ *Twin Cobra is a clear, well presented game.*

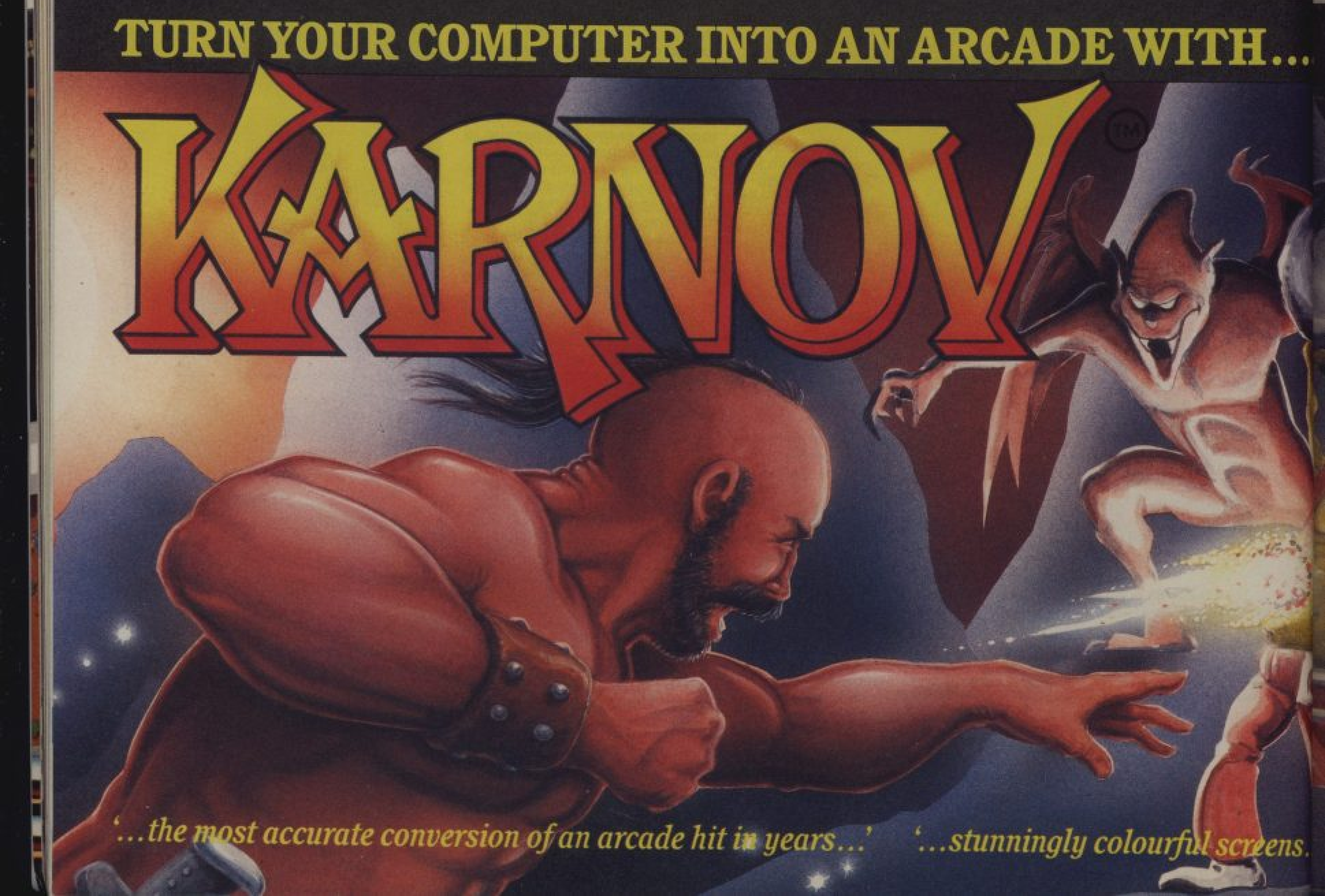


▲ *It's a well planned and exciting game.*

respite, but long enough to get some feeling back into your aching trigger finger.

One aspect about *Twin Cobra* whichI like are the large sprites. Everything is a decent size and the whole game is clear and easy to see with no messy graphics cluttering the view. The game is incredibly fast and judging by the queues waiting to play it, very popular. I thoroughly enjoyed it, even though it is so like dozens of others before. At least it has been well planned with a lot of thought going into gameplay, feel and looks.

ADVERTISERS INDEX



REVIEWS

Tony Takoushi goes into overdrive this month as he rants and raves about the delights of Stinger on the Nintendo and three ace Sega sensations. Hang on to your seats, the action starts . . . NOW.

• STINGER

How do you fancy a shoot'em up that throws absolutely everything at you?

Is that saliva oozing from your mouth?

GOOD!

Stinger is a newie shoot'em up from Konami for the Nintendo console, it packs a mean mean punch and is going to have you begging for more.

The scenario is jolly spiffy with you out to rescue a professor (he looks like a reject from *Back to the Future)* who has been kidnapped by the dreaded Attackons. Your craft is called a *Stinger* and you have to battle through seven stages to rescue the prof.



▲ *Stinger — packs a mean punch.*

There is a choice of one or two players (two players is simultaneous play and you can join up for a ripple laser) and the action takes place against horizontal and vertical scrolling backdrops.

Your ship starts with basic firepower of bullets and bombs and these can be enhanced by shooting and collecting different coloured bells which can be shot out of clouds floating across the screen. Yellow bell (500-10,000 points), Blue Bell (speed up), Red Bell (laser), White Bell (double fire), red and white (triple fire power with three ships), blue and white (force field).

On the ground are targets which be shot and collected to boost fire power.

If your ship gets hurt an ambulance appears which you must make contact with to return you to normal (you can only use this once per life).

The first scene is a horizontal scroll across the Pacific Ocean. Scene two is in an undersea Kingdom which has you shooting against a vertical scroll. The third scene has you flying across the desert with rattling clothes hangars trying to ram you (this is straight out of *Revenge of the Mutant Camels!)*, and is a horizontal scroll.



▲ *Stinger — rescue mission.*

It is a stunning game with some truly staggering power ups and fast, twisted zap the mothers action. Go get it!

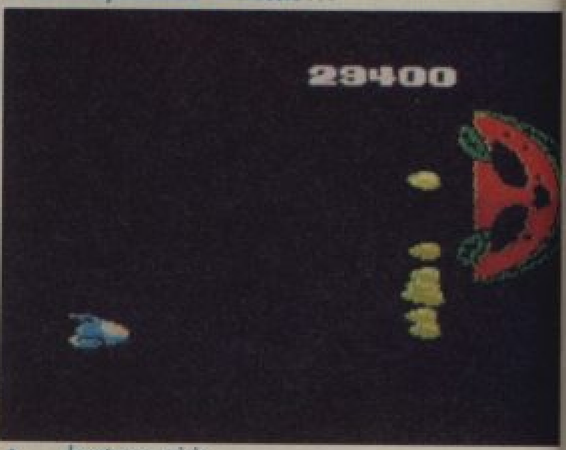
► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	8
► PLAYABILITY	9
► OVERALL	9

• SEGA SPECIALS

Three of the best offerings for the Sega console are *SDI, Alien Syndrome* and *Zillion 2.*

They are all 128K games and are scheduled for release in March, prices should all be around £20.


▲ *Alien Syndrome — classic . . .*



▲ *. . . hostage crisis.*

You are probably familiar with SDI from the arcades, it is a *Missile Command* deriviative with a fast almost compulsive feel to it. The scenario has you sitting in a Global Defense Satellite high above the Earth you have to shoot down missiles, satellites and Crab Ships which are trying to blow up Earth.

To stop them you control the Satellite and a cursor sight, button 1 and the joypad moves the satellite while joypad and button two sight and fire interceptor missiles.

The game has ten stages, five offensive and five defensive (Earth, Moon, Asteroid Belt, Saturn and Hidden Planet). You have three lives with a life being lost if you are shot by the enemy.

You are faced with an Offensive half to start with, if any missiles pass you have to play a defensive half destroying the missiles before they enter the atmosphere and hit the planet (the damage meter is carried over).

You start against a smooth scrolling backdrop of space (left to right) and missiles fly in from the right side of the screen.

SDI is a quality game with a good feel and enough action to keep you away from the TV. Firing into a cursor takes a little getting used to but when you do . . .

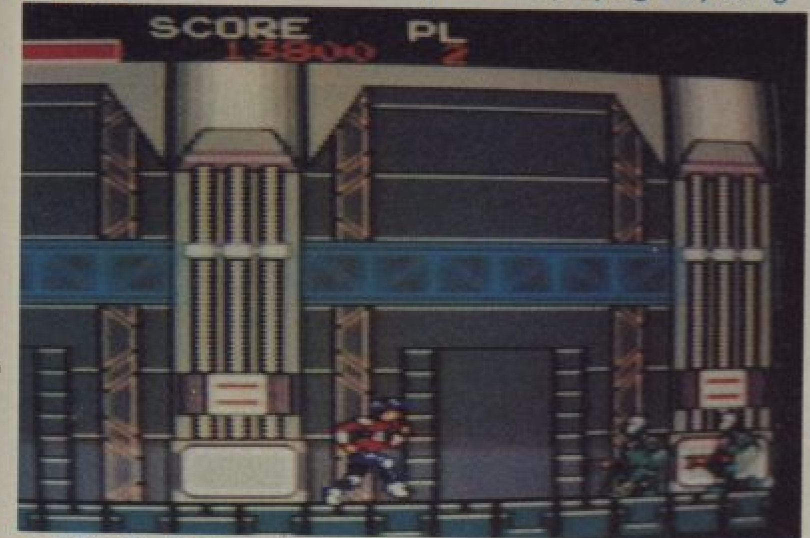
Alien Syndrome is another game from the arcades. It is a classic L and R job with the usual high strains of play and presentation expected from Sega. You take the role of Ricky or Mary and have to rescue Hostages from seven different ships before a bomb goes off.



▲ *SDI — quality.*



▲ *Zillion 2.*



▲ *Zillion 2 — brain puzzler.*

Each ship has several rooms to investigate, and is populated by two different aliens. Ordinary aliens are fatal to the touch while Defenders are in every room in the ship and can be shot, rendered useless for a limited time (they fire at you while aliens just roam around).

To rescue the hostages you simply walk over them and when they have all been collected you can go to an exit where you have to battle the Alien Boxx of that ship (a super duper biggy who is just begging for a good zap). He has to be beaten to progress to the next ship. You can upgrade your weapons by picking out weapons from the walls throughout the ship (Fireball, Laser, Warp and Mystery).

The last goody is *Zillion 2.* If my mailbag is anything to go by there are a lot of fans of the original. You have to battle your way through eight stages, the emphasis being more on fast intuitive arcade action than brain puzzles.

You switch roles from a bike rider (tasty BIG sprite) who has to leap over gaps in the road while zapping everything that moves, to flying robot (another biggie) blasting his way (both scenes against a fast smooth scroll).

Beautifully playable and slick to the bone this is a must if you enjoyed the original. In case you should have any problems playing it try using the continue function by holding the joystick up and pressing button one when Game Over comes up.

	SDI	ALIEN SYNDROME	ZILLION 2
▸ GRAPHICS	8	8	8
▸ SOUND	7	7	7
▸ PLAYABILITY	9	8	9
▸ OVERALL	8	8	8



• ZAXXON 3D

Zaxxon caused quite a stir when it was released with its diagonal scroll and perspective gameplay. Well it has been a long time coming but a 3-D version is here compliments of Sega.

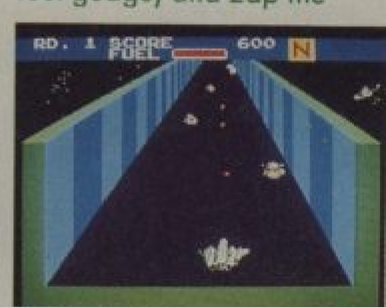
The scenario and gameplay closely follows the original BUT it is in 3-D!

You start play out in space where fighters come at you from the horizon slowly getting bigger as they get closer. You can move in all eight directions firing as you go. If your ship is on the same horizontal level as the enemy a sight appears in front of the ship and you can spray bullets at it.

Some enemy ships release a pod when they are destroyed, these give extra points and can increase your speed and firepower.

After the space battle you see the fortress come at you from the horizon slowly filling up the screen. This is a very strong effect, as with the arcade version you have to fly through a gap in the top level of the entrance.

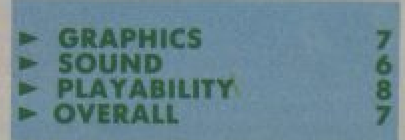
When you fly in you then have to swoop down to the floor of the fortress and shoot the fuel dumps (increase your fuel guage) and zap the



▲ *Zaxxon 3D.*

enemy bases for points (and pods). Keep an eye on the gauge for if it hits zero you lose one of your three lives.

Overall *Zaxxon 3-D* is the best 3-D game yet, although it is a bit slow to start with. The 3-D glasses are not cheap at around £40 and I would suggest you try them in the shop before forking out your hard earned cash.



▸ GRAPHICS	7
▸ SOUND	6
▸ PLAYABILITY	8
▸ OVERALL	7

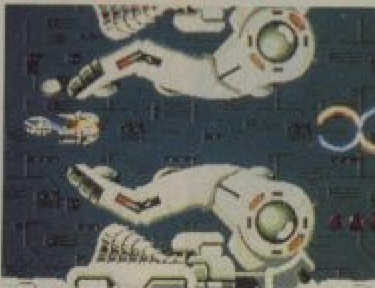
NEWS

• Sega is set to release a graphic tablet for its Master System. You plug it into the console in the same way as a cartridge but a cord leads out of the cart to a drawing tablet. The basic functions on the unit are, change background colour, draw symmetry, clear display, clear all graphics and use cursor as eraser. A UK release date has not been set.



▲ *Metroid.*

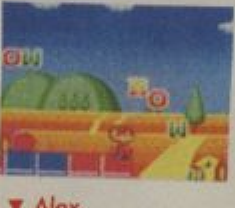
• Twelve titles are planned for release for the quarter to March 1988, so most of these should be in the shops now! *Kung Fu Kid, Fantasy Zone 2, After Burner, Global Defense (SDI), Zaxxon 3-D, Alien Syndrome, Rescue Mission, Zillion 2, Alex Kidd and the Lost Stars, Super Wonder Boy in Monster Land, Cube Zone, Maze Hunter 3-D.*



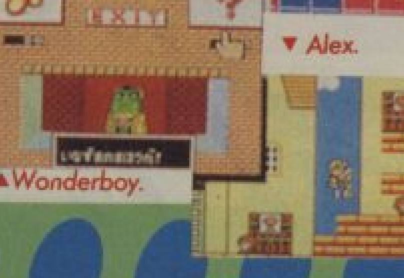
▲ *R — Type.*

Other titles in the pipeline are *Great Baseball, Football, Basketball, Space Harrier 3-D, Blade Eagle 3-D, Monopoly* (seen a demo and it looks good), *Parlour* games, *Rambo, Aztec, Adventure* and *Penguin* Land.

• Nintendo has announced a new joystick controller called the NES Advantage. Price has yet to be confirmed.



▼ *Alex.*



▲ *Wonderboy.*

Screen shots from CBM version.

"The graphics are well designed and the scrolling is faultless."

HAPPY COMPUTER
Germany

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Right from the word GO!, Jinks will test your reflexes, judgement and skill to the absolute limit.
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NINTENDO: The Way Ahead

Nintendo is based in Koyoto, Japan and has been in the entertainment business for more than 95 years. The Family Computer System (FCS) was released in Japanese in 1983 and Nintendo sold one million consoles in the US in 1986 and over three million in 1987. Tony Takoushi meets Nintendo's head man.

In the wake of Mattel losing the Nintendo distribution rights and a new company being set up (NESI), I decided to find out just what the implications are for UK owners.

The boss of the UK operation is Bruce Lowry, who was Vice-President of Sales for Nintendo in the US. Does the formation of the new UK company mean we will be getting new games, fan clubs and new peripherals?

BL: "Nintendo has 3-D glasses but they are expensive, third-party software development is expensive so I do not know how the 3-D will take off. It has been slow in developing. I think it may be a fad and an expensive one at that. We will be watching the Sega situation closely.

"We have two joysticks, but we have not finalised release dates or prices. A trackball is also expensive and we do not have any plans at present in that area.

"We will also be setting up fan clubs over here, and they will interact with others in European countries. Badges, sweatshirts, club magazine and special events will all be happening."

TT: With so many good games coming from the arcades will games be converted from Sega to Nintendo and vice-versa?

BL: "I do not think it will happen."

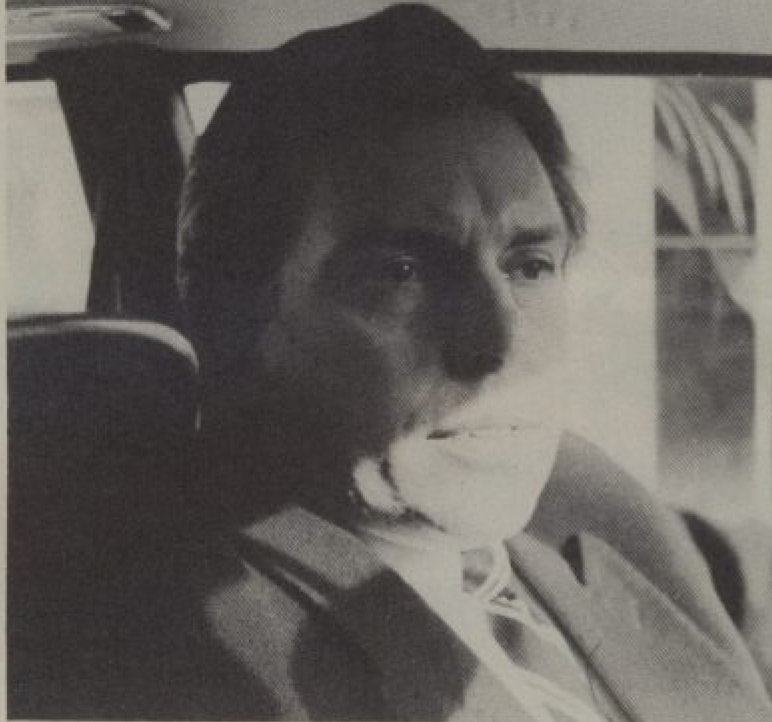
TT: Just how big are the catalogues at present?

BL: "Between third party and Nintendo games there are around 65-70 games, and around 30-35 on the Sega."

TT: With such enormous success in the arcades why has Sega failed in the US?

BL: "Sega was introduced into the US market around four months (March 1986) after Nintendo was launched, and they managed to get their console in the shops alongside the Nintendo. They also launched a TV campaign and various other promotions. So the two of them were battling for the market. The consumer got to play and see both systems side by side in shops. The quality of the Nintendo and the backup and promotions proved too much for the Sega and it could not compete. Last year 3.2 million Nintendo units were sold in the US and Sega sold less than 10 percent of that.

"In the arcade business you can be a hero today and be at the bottom tomorrow. Sega is fortunate that it has had two or three big arcade hits in a row. But all it takes is two or three bad ones in a row and you have fallen out of the limelight. Nintendo has shown consistent solid sales."



▲ *Bruce Lowry, Nintendo.*

TT: When are we going to see the latest Nintendo games in the UK?

BL: "We will bring all the latest stuff as quickly as possible, not only Nintendo titles but also the third-party games."

TT: Isn't the UK small fry compared to the rest of the world and won't we always be third in line behind Japan and the US?

BL: "We have had a tremendous response in the US from European customers, how can we get it and when will it be here?

"I do not think the UK will be behind, when the console is out and promotions are in full swing we will be accelerating the introduction of software so there will be almost simultaneous US/UK launches.

TT: How do you view the UK and will games be developed here?

BL: "Nintendo is already talking to UK software houses, it has been happening for the past two or three years. Games are presented to Nintendo from the UK as well as the US in fact worldwide."

TT: I recently heard of a Nintendo clone being produced in Taiwan and selling at below market price, IS piracy a problem?

BL: "Not at this time, Nintendo is well known for its aggressive enforcement of its copyright."

TT: What promos can we expect in 1988?

BL: "There are two areas here, TV which we feel is a strong source to push the console and games. We will be spending around two million pounds on the TV push in the build up to Christmas 1988. Secondly we will be spending over one million pounds on instore displays, literature, select consoles similar to arcades where the consumer can choose a game from a 12/16 cartridges stacked in the machine and play it instantly at the press of a button."

TT: Will there be any price reductions on the console or games?

BL: "We will have two basic packages, the control deck and *Super Marios Bros* cart and the Deluxe set which includes a robot and light gun. All I can say about price is that when the Deluxe set was launched in 1985 it was selling for between 139 and 159 dollars and today it still sells in the same price range."

TT: What prices will the new games sell for?

BL: "The end user is the real key to this. The questions to be asked are is the consumer satisfied with the game and how long are they satisfied with it? It comes down to the keyword 'play value."

"Pricing on software will be around £20 to £30".

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MAILBAG

• How come all the people on C+VG have such funny names? Tony Takoushi, The Fiend, Seamus St. John ... I've been around for fourteen years now and never once met anybody called any of those. Are they real names or have you just made them up? Now we have a new editor called Eugene, I ask you! Nobody is really called that. Then I got the latest ish (March) and even the new staff writer's got a bloody silly last name. Just what is going on? These people make Melissa Ravenflame seem plausible. At least there is always Paul Boughton, who sounds nice and normal, but I bet he isn't really. Can we see a picture of them all to prove they exist.
Danny Boggis.
Nottingham.

Editor's reply: No. And with your last name, well ...

• How come Shuk – or is it Doode? I can't tell which is which – looks exactly the same as Bradley in 2000 AD? Same ridiculous toothy grin, same bulging eyes, same hopeless 1978 hair "style". Same antisocial behaviour too? Have you been copying the Mighty One, or is there a mole in the C+VG office? We should be told, why can't you have nice comics in the mag anyway, like the Beano or My Little Pony. I'm sure that would be far more popular.

Simon Rustler,
Isle of Lewis,
Scotland

Editor's reply: Well, you know what they say, Simon, great minds think alike ...

• What I'd like to ask you all at C+VG is why all the video games are so hard to play. I have only just started and an finding that often I can't even get beyond the first level! There is one game that I have yet to last more than ten seconds on and it is getting really frustrating. I am beginning to get to hate that stupid music that comes on each time you have to try again. What I am asking is why do the manufacturers not make some games that aren't too hard for the less experienced gamers to play, as well as the really hard ones for the experts? They could mark on the cover a difficulty rating, so we could know which ones to buy, like on books where they say suitable for ages 11-13 or whatever.
Andy Lillow,
Steeton,
W. Yorks.

• May I use your pages to pass on some useful tips I have come across which readers may have missed in past issues of *C+VG*.

Tip One. How to crack the release date code for *C+VG*. It's always stated in the magazine pages as "Out 15th . . ." but, in fact, comes out around the 24th of each month. I cracked the code when I read page 72 of the March issue. This shows the contents of Next Month's issue. The bottom left-hand column states "Out on sale March 15th," but the bottom right-hand column states "April's *C+VG* out on March 26th."

Tip Two. If, like me, you have 3,000 titles on your ST (What do you mean rubbish? Everybody claims to have 3,000 titles for their machine) then you may have experienced the same problem that I have. Where to put them? I tried putting one hundred in a shoebox – but do you put 30 shoeboxes? Good ol' *C+VG* came to my rescue. The inside story on page 5 of the March issue states: "The launch of Xenon for the ST and Amiga . . . are now beginning to be captured on 2½ inch discs." Why didn't I think of that? Cut one inch off those 3½ inch discs! Careful marking with a ruler and pencil and then careful snipping with sidecutters gave me instantly 30 per cent more room on my shelves.

There is one very small drawback that has me stumped. How to get those molten blobs of 2½ inch square blue plastic out of my 3½ inch drive.

I am not the type to give up easily so I hope to have the answer ready for you in the May edition which will be in the newsagents on the 15th or 26th of April.
M. Lackery,
Basildon,
Essex.

Editor's reply: Thank you for your very helpful tips. Ha! I bet you think we haven't got a very good excuse about the date mix up? Wrong! How much do you know about black holes, time warps and *C+VG's* highly-controversial theory of relativity? Not a lot, I bet. So there's not a lot of point in explaining, is there? As for the disk mistake, what's one inch between friends?

• *AAAAAAAAAGH!* I knew it. It just had to happen. The price went up. I was expecting £1.25 but it was £1.10. Was 15 pence worth it? You might as well go to £1.25. What do other readers think?

A few things about the mag: reviews are perfect, reviewers are perfect and has Paul put on weight? Also on your mag in the March 88 mag you said it would be out on the 26th or the 15th as usual!

And as for *T.T.* shooting his mouth off about his arcade machines and car, that doesn't mean he can shout out across the world about the predictions for 8-bit computers. What a load of rubbish! What does he know about the future?
Aaron Bradford,
Basildon,
Essex.

Editor's reply: 15p may not be a lot to you, Aaron, but it could be for our other readers. Our aim is to keep the price as low as possible. No Paul hasn't put on weight. That's Garry Williams, our Ad Manager. He is visibly growing larger by the hour. *T.T.* knows a lot about the future. It's something to do with his crystal ball. I've already explained about the date mix-up.

• What on earth has happened to my fav. magazine!! I have been reading *C+VG* for about three years now and I feel as though I have learned a lot through your pages. Not just about the latest games coming out – I thoroughly enjoyed reading all your features – from making your own Alien mask to what's hot on the other side of the Atlantic.

This was one of *C+VG's* strong points. It made you stand out from all the others on the newstand. Even when *Games Machine* and *Ace* were launched you could see they had obviously taken a leaft out of your book and had incorporated features alongside the software reviews.

So, what happened to *C+VG?* Less and less features and more software reviews. Okay I know that first and foremost you have to cater for the computer buying public, but, kids do have other interests and it was great buying *C+VG* and getting two magazines for the price of one. Many of my interests nowadays stem from reading them first in *C+VG*.

So come on guys pull your socks up and give us what we want – otherwise you will end up like an up-market *Commodore User!!*

It's your readers who have put you on the number one slot time and time again, doesn't this tell you that you had the right formula. If you carry on like this I wouldn't be surprised to see your crown slip!
George Wilkins,
Peckham,
London.

• I would appreciate if you would inform your readers of the Scottish Office of MSX Link International. We are currently the largest MSX users group in the UK, with both offices publishing a separate monthly magazine. The Scottish office is for anyone, and we have at present members from all over the UK and the world.

The Scottish office's publication is a monthly eight to 10 page newsletter, which is filled with news, reviews, hints/tips, MSX-2 news, and lots more.

It costs only £8 per year to join, for this fee you will receive 12 monthly newsletters, and friendly advice when required, if you would like further information then you are invited to send a large SAE to the address below.
MSX Link International,
Scottish Office,
North Lodge,
Cairnhill Road,
Airdrie,
Scotland, ML6 9RJ

Editor's reply: Thanks for the information, Craig, but where's our copy.

• Wow, March *C+VG* had the best cover ever! It was brilliant. I rushed out to buy the game, it's a pity they didn't use your picture on their box.

Mind you, *C+VG's* covers are usually better than any of the other computer mags. *Outrun* was my favourite before Xenon as it was really like the games *and* I love Ferrari's.

Why don't you use the cover's as the posters in the magazine I would put them all on my walls.
Roger Green,
Stoke Newington,
London.

Editor's reply: We're all glad you like our cover illustrations, Roger. We will try to keep up the good work. We don't use cover artwork as posters because we would rather use a new illustration for the poster.



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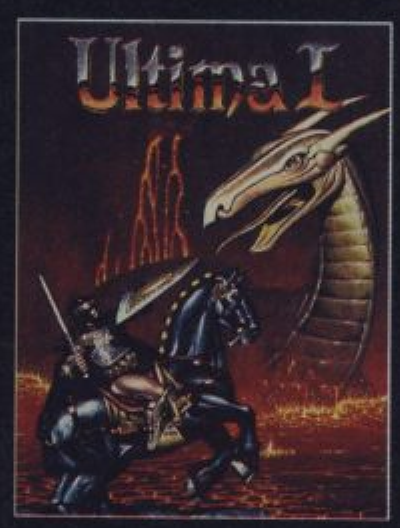


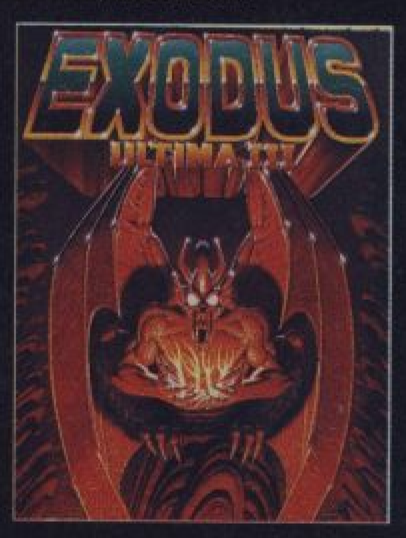


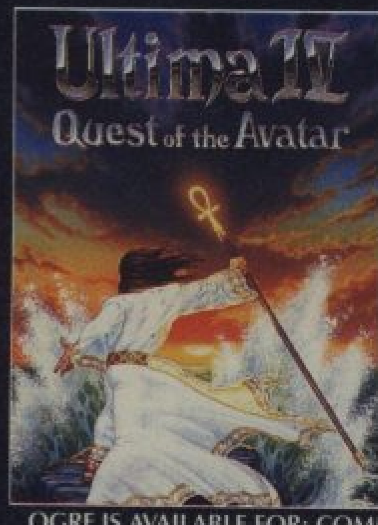
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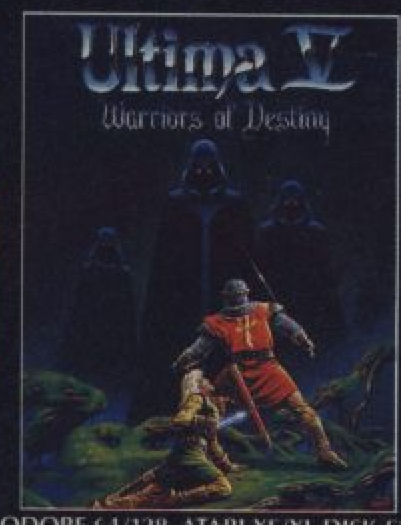
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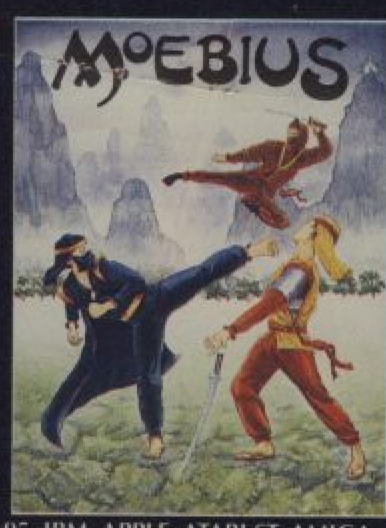
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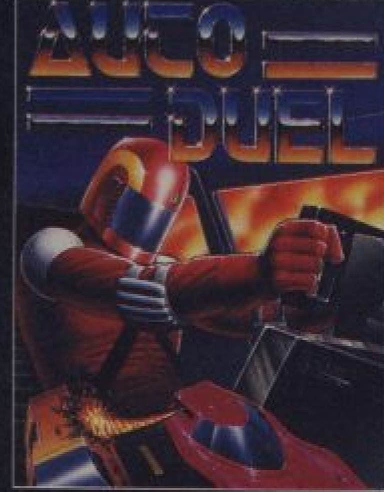


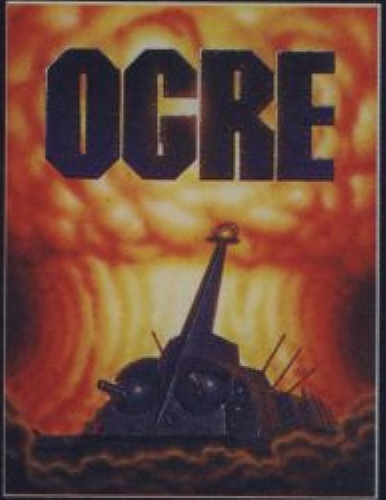






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Hot Gossip

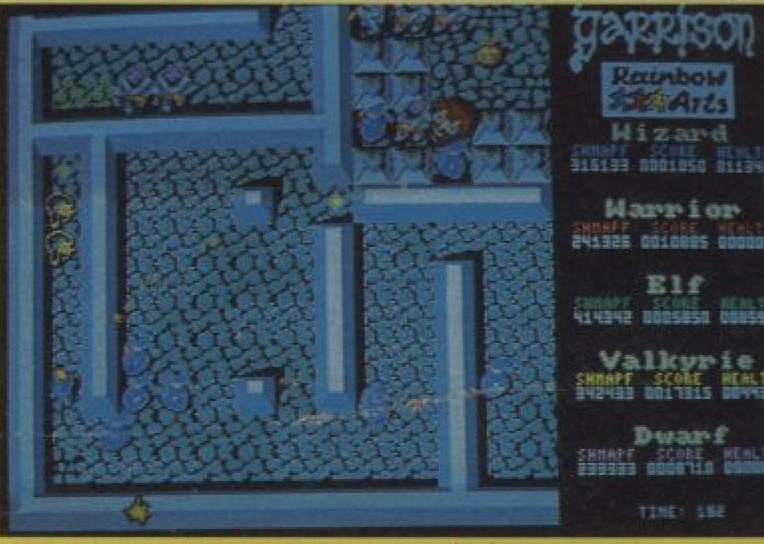
Loud and proud and ready to shock. Yes, C+VG's very own Mr T – Tony Takoushi – is back to rant and rave about computer games. Love or hate him, just read him.

You thrilled to the reviews, you drolled over the packaging, you perspired over the keyboard and you may even have enjoyed playing *Garrison* from Digital Dreams, the *Gauntlet* inspired offering for the Amiga.

Well, you can look forward to the same again with *Garrison Two*. It runs on a standard Amiga 500, with enhanced graphics and highscore save for those of you with larger memories.

The game plays much like *Gauntlet* in that you have to travel from section to section collecting keys (to open doors and walls), portions, food and just about anything else to hand before escaping through an Exit. The screen scrolls around as you move. The two scores to watch are Health and Time, these both count down continuously and if time hits zero the health score decreases at twice its normal speed.

There are various treasures to collect (500 and 1000 points), food (1000 and 2500 points), teleports, glue patches, these are a DRAG, medicine (a real goody giving 5000 health points), scrolls (these remove magic blocks and act as smart bombs). The enemy comes in many guises, sorcerers, guards, demons, conjurers, ghosts, morphs and deaths (I hate these).



▲ The playability of Garrison is unmatched.

▲ Watch out! Death may be working round the corner.



▲ Choose between five different characters.

You can use the scrolls collected to kill Deaths and you should watch out for the Conjurers who lob magic orbs at you (these mothers are mean and fast). You can destroy the enemy by shooting although they are not all one-shot pushovers, Deaths drain a lot of energy if they touch you.

Presentation is very good, the graphics and sound were made for each other and play is painfully good. The playability and speed of this game is unmatched and indeed it would be hard to emulate on any other machine. If you enjoyed the original Garrison then this will give you a lot of the same.

by Tony Takoushi

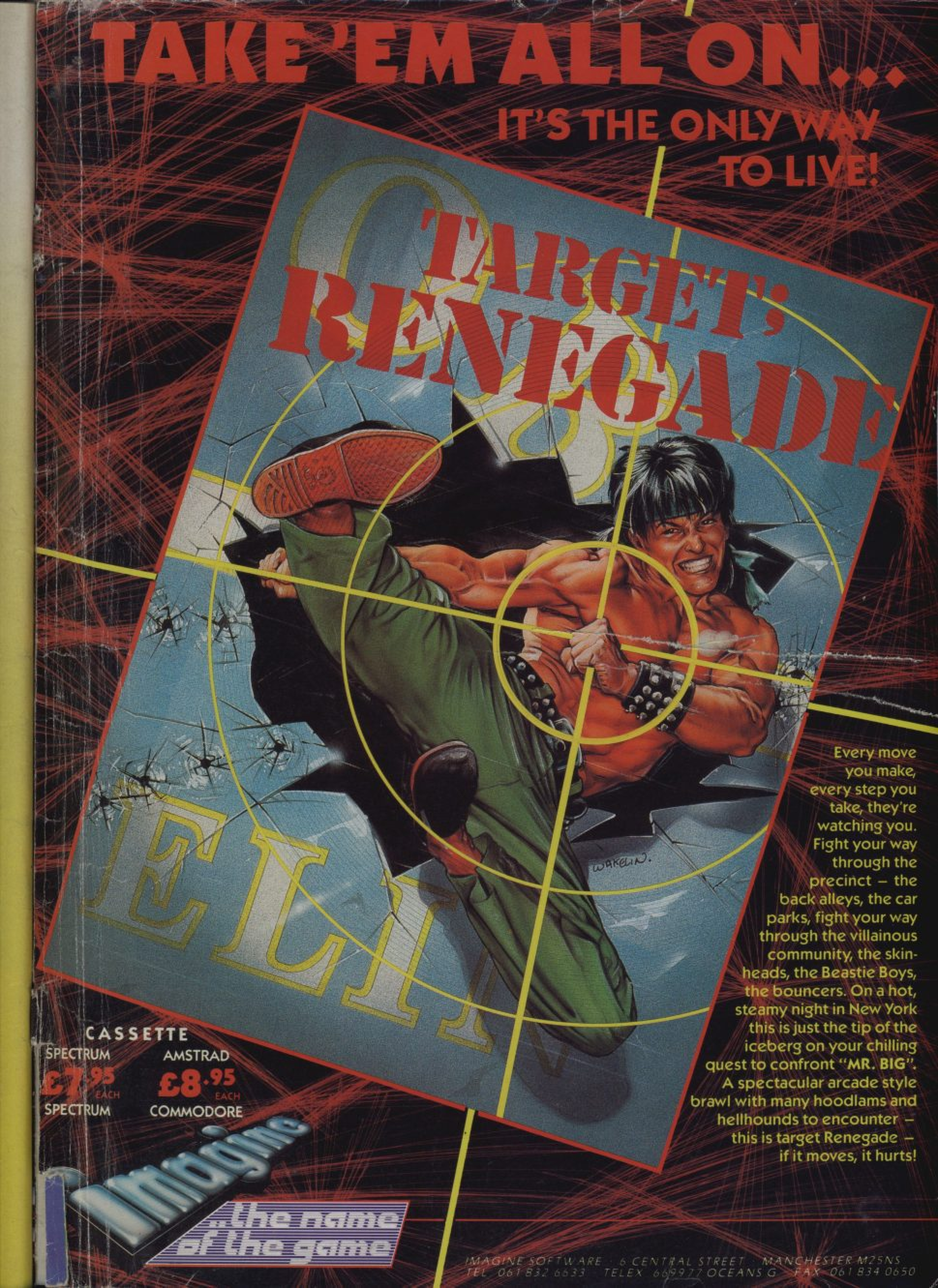
The next time you visit your local arcade stop and look around you.

In the not too distant future you may find that arcade companies will tend to shy away from producing coin-ops and concentrate their energies on console and computer software.

Think about it, in coming years consoles and computers will be getting dedicated graphics chips and supremely fast processors and co-processors.

The implication is that what is sitting under the sofa in your front room will have the power of (say) a Space Harrier coin-op. What arcade company in its right mind is going to spend a small fortune developing state-of-the-art machines/games if it can scale them down for home use and ship millions worldwide.

The Nintendo console is a taste and perhaps an indicator, it has a huge worldwide base, the games being written for it are either from the arcades or hit (and I mean HIT) computer titles.


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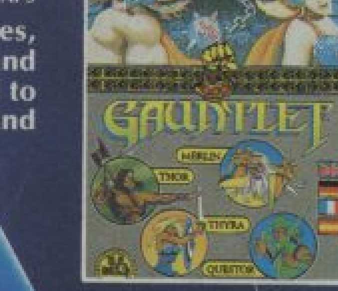
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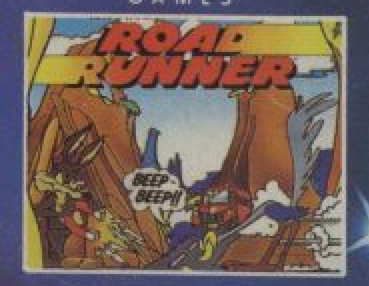
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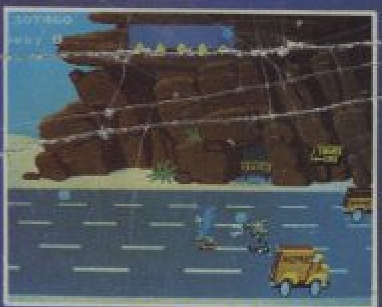






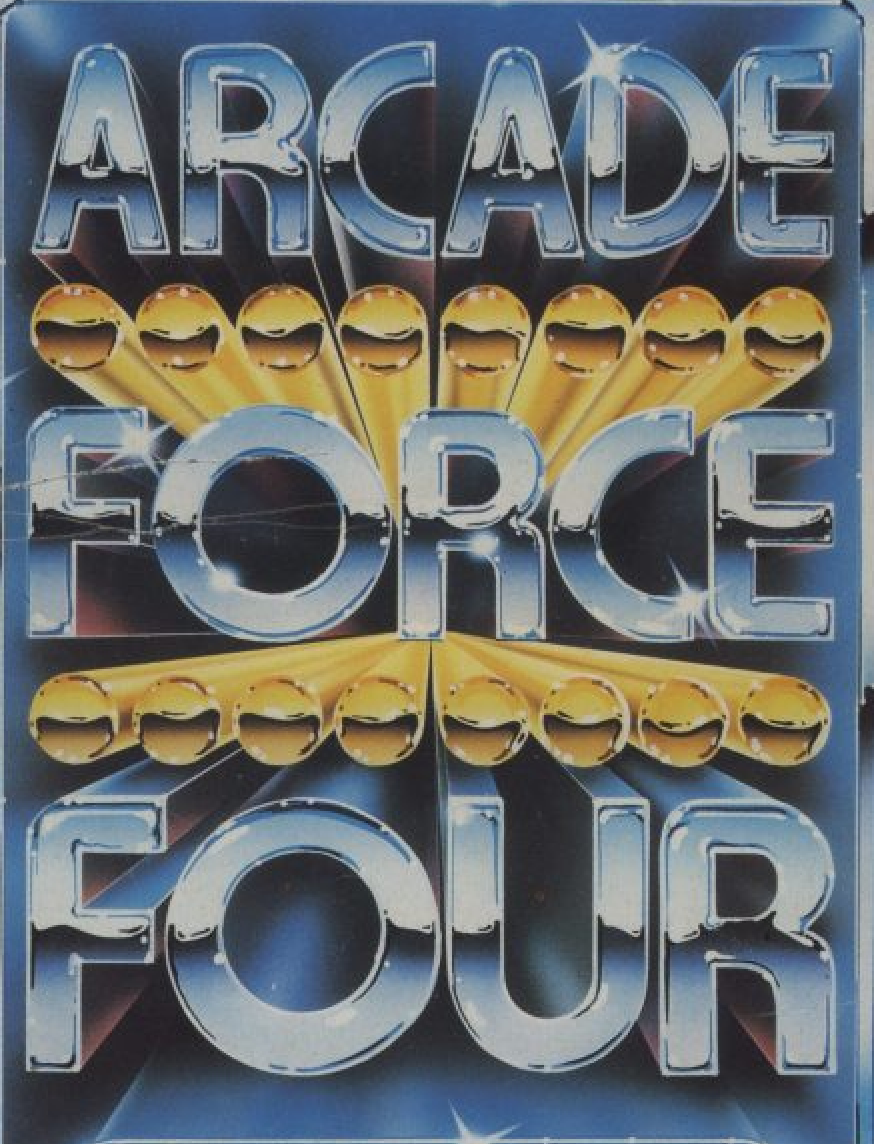
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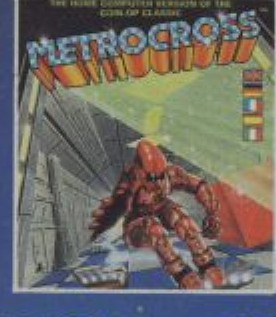




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